

THE Nonconformist.

"THE DISSIDENCE OF DISSENT AND THE PROTESTANTISM OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION."

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MOVEMENT

AGAINST THE

MINUTES OF COUNCIL.

CONFERENCE AT CROSBY HALL.

The Conference announced to be held on this subject commenced its sittings at Crosby Hall, Bishopsgate-street, on Tuesday morning, the 13th inst. At ten o'clock a considerable number of Delegates had assembled, and they continued to arrive throughout the day, until every part of the hall was crowded. On the platform we observed Dr. R. W. Hamilton, Dr. Godwin, Dr. Vaughan, Dr. T. Price, Dr. Jenkyn, Dr. Massie, Dr. Legge, and Messrs. J. H. Hinton, J. A. James (Birmingham), C. Stovel, S. T. Porter (Darwen), J. W. Richardson, R. Ainslie, ministers, &c. &c.; G. W. Alexander, J. Sturge, Edward Miall, Edward Baines, jun., Esqrs., &c. &c.

Mr. J. H. HINTON, Baptist minister, having offered up prayer, took the chair *pro tem.* and said: Brethren and friends, not to assume a position of distinction, but to fulfil a duty imposed upon me by the Central Committee, have I placed myself before you. My duty, in brief, is to explain to you the circumstances under which you have been called together, and the object now presented to you. The body by whom you have been convened is the Central Committee for promoting opposition to the measure respecting education, developed in the Minutes of Council on Education of August and December last, and now before the public. That Central Committee was formed at a meeting called by public advertisement, in the City of London, and is representative inasmuch as it contains members of many religious communities. Having carried out a strenuous opposition in conjunction with many friends of similar sentiments in many parts of the country without apparent effect, till Lord John Russell announced that on the 19th of April he should bring forward the Educational Scheme, they availed themselves readily of the suggestion that reached them from various parts of the country, to call a General Conference. They have complied, and if they have assumed too much, they ask at your hands at least an act of indemnity. The object in view is to give the fullest possible expression and the freest possible expression of opinion in relation to the measures of Government, and to resolve upon any practical course that may seem good to you in this matter, and carry it out. There is but one point in which the Central Committee have ventured to anticipate your decision, that one relates to the great public meeting they have convened for Thursday next. They thought it certain that you would wish that such a meeting should be convened in connexion with the Conference, but it was necessary it should be convened, if at all, before your arrival. All the arrangements of that meeting are at your discretion, the fact only of the meeting having been resolved upon. Having made that statement, my duty is discharged, and it lies with you now to elect a Chairman for the Conference. When that part of the duty shall have been complied with, I shall vacate the chair for the gentlemen on whom your vote may fall.

Dr. VAUGHAN moved that the nomination of a Chairman be referred to a Committee to be appointed forthwith.

The motion having been seconded, Dr. Vaughan, Alderman Kershaw, Mr. Sturge, Dr. Godwin, and Dr. T. Price were then nominated.

Mr. J. H. HINTON stated that an application had been made to Lord John Russell to inquire whether he would be prepared to receive a deputation on the 14th inst., and to which his lordship's reply had been received. The following are the letters written by the respective parties:—

King's Head, Poultry, April 9, 1847.

My LORD,—I am instructed by the Central Committee appointed to oppose the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, of August and December, 1846, to inform your lordship that, in compliance with suggestions from many quarters, they have taken measures for convening in London a general conference of the opponents of the measure that those Minutes involve.

The Central Committee, deeming it probable that the contemplated Conference will be disposed to solicit the honour of an interview with your lordship, have directed me to communicate their impression to your lordship, and, out of regard to your lordship's convenience, to inquire whether your lordship's numerous engagements will leave the members of the Conference any room to hope that your lordship will be able to receive a deputation of their number at any hour on the 14th instant.

In making this request, I am instructed to assure your lordship that the Central Committee have no other object in view than to study your convenience by anticipating a

request which might be made on the part of the Conference itself, at so late a period as to be inconvenient.

I am, my lord, with great respect, your lordship's obedient humble servant,
J. M. HARE.
Right Hon. Lord John Russell.

Downing-street, 10th April, 1847.

SIR,—I am desired by Lord John Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th inst.

In reply, I have to acquaint you that his lordship has already received several deputations on the same subject, and being now so fully occupied by the great press of public business, will be unable to name a time for an interview with the members of the Conference.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,
J. M. Hare, Esq. R. W. GREY.

Dr. LEGGE (Leicester) congratulated the meeting upon the reply. He had, in conjunction with some of his friends in Leicestershire, made a similar application, and had received a similar answer. He supposed that his lordship had heard of the meadows of Leicestershire, and was afraid that the deputations would come down upon him like the bulls of Bashan [laughter].

Dr. VAUGHAN then announced that the election of the Committee had fallen on Mr. Alderman Kershaw, of Manchester. The worthy Alderman was then proposed to the meeting, and the resolution unanimously adopted.

Mr. J. H. HINTON then laid before the Chairman a programme of the suggested proceedings of the meeting, wishing it to be understood that it was entirely open to the Conference as to whether or not it would adopt it.

Mr. ALDERMAN KERSHAW having taken the chair, then rose and said: I confess I am taken greatly by surprise by the appointment you have made of your Chairman, and I feel most deeply that I shall have to throw myself upon your kind indulgence. I have not been much accustomed to preside over large meetings of this kind, but I do assure you that I bring to this meeting in which you are assembled a most anxious desire that our discussions should be such as shall convince the Government and the country that we are in earnest in the assertion of our sentiments, and that we feel most deeply the position in which the Minutes of Council will place us as a body. I will not, however, detain you with any further observations, but proceed at once to the business of the day, as I feel confident that the time will be better occupied by listening to the observations of other gentlemen who will address you than by any that I can make.

J. M. HARE, Esq., then read the programme of the suggested proceedings for the day.

Mr. BARPITT, (of Grantham), minister, then moved the appointment of the following gentlemen to constitute a Business Committee:—G. W. Alexander, Esq., F. Wills, Esq., of Bristol, Dr. Legge, of Leicester, Dr. T. Price, Mr. J. Ely, Mr. J. H. Hinton, Edward Baines, jun., Esq., Mr. E. Miall, Dr. Vaughan, Dr. Massie, and Joseph Sturge, Esq.

The resolution was put and carried.

The CHAIRMAN then invited the Conference to a free discussion upon the subject, by stating their opinions.

Mr. R. AINSLIE having been called for, rose and said: I rise at your call, but I will only occupy a few moments. I am exceedingly unwilling to intrude, for so I consider it for any London minister, especially in my circumstances, to begin by offering any observations to the Conference. I have no idea of anything of the kind—we are talking about it so incessantly that when we have so many fresh faces and voices we should like to have rested. Probably it may be well to call your attention to a book which has just been published, and which the *Globe* newspaper directly attributes to Mr. Shuttleworth, and one of the first things I meet with in this book, at the 20th page, is what I very deeply regret to be compelled (Mr. J. A. James, of Birmingham, here entered the hall, and was loudly cheered) to call an insult, a very gross insult to the whole of the Dissenting body, at least those who advocate freedom of education; the passage is this, "When, therefore, freedom of education from the interference of Government becomes the war-cry of any party, will it not be suspected that they seek the interest of a class rather than the welfare of the nation? that they prefer popular ignorance to party insignificance, the liberty to neglect the condition of the people rather than the liberty of progressive civilization?" Now that this should have just come fresh from the Committee of Council, from the pen of Dr. Kay Shuttleworth I regret. I should suppose—although secretaries do some things sometimes of an extraordinary character—I apprehend and fear that this book would not have come from the Committee of Council without the sanction of the Marquis of Lansdowne; it ought to have gone under the eye of Lord J. Russell, and if we can think for a moment, which I am unwilling to do, that the Marquis of Lansdowne or Lord John Russell could have read a passage like this, after what they know of the operations of the Dissenters, it would place these noblemen, in relation with the Dissenters, certainly in no very enviable position. If after the injustice done to us in the Minutes of Council, they are to be followed by so gross an insult as

this, and by a statement so entirely unproved, what can we hope for? Very little, especially with regard to the future working-out of the Minutes of Council. If we are treated this way now, what shall we be by-and-bye, when the Minutes are confirmed, and when you have the entire power given by these Minutes to these parties to work out whatever they may deem best for the accomplishment of their own purposes. Now, there is a passage in another part, however, where Kay Shuttleworth refers especially to the clergy, and where he states, what has long been the deep conviction of the clergy with regard to popular education, or rather what had been. It is to this effect: that, for a long time they had had the deep conviction, that, to educate the humbler classes, would be decidedly unfavourable to their happiness, and would lead to their insurrection against the upper classes. Now, a statement of this kind in connexion with the one read to you, certainly presents the education of the country under a novel aspect. Who has attempted to educate the people of this country, as far as it has proceeded? It is quite true that one of the first things done after the expulsion or retirement—I may use the word expulsion—of our nonconforming ancestors from the national church, was, to enact in the 14th Charles II.:—"And if any school master, or other person, instructing or teaching youth in any private house or family, as a tutor or schoolmaster, before license obtained from his respective archbishop, bishop, or ordinary of the diocese, according to the laws and statutes of this realm (for which he shall pay 12d. only), and before such subscription and acknowledgment made as aforesaid, then every such schoolmaster, and others instructing and teaching as aforesaid, shall, for the first offence, suffer three months' imprisonment, without bail or mainprize; and for every second and other such offence, shall suffer three months' imprisonment, without bail or mainprize, and also forfeit to his Majesty the sum of five pounds." Now there is no evidence here that they wanted to nurture, at that early period, the education of the humbler classes. That is one of the first things I would name; the last is, that since the introduction of Sir James Graham's Bill, the Congregationalists alone have raised upwards of £120,000, besides the support of their Sunday-schools and day-schools, the amounts of which are not at all included in that £120,000 [hear, hear]. Now Kay Shuttleworth knows these things; Lord John Russell and the Marquis Lansdowne knew these things, and, therefore, we complain with a Christian temper, not angrily, but we do complain against this as a very serious offence committed on the part of the Committee of Council against Dissenters. Since our opposition to these Government measures, I am sorry to say it is entirely in harmony with three, four, or five of the daily journals. It was only yesterday that the *Daily News* [hisses] stated distinctly three errors in one paragraph. One was, that the British and Foreign School Society had given in its adhesion to the support of this measure whereas the Committee have been entirely neutral. There is a requisition now gone into the Committee, signed by a proper number of the subscribers, to call a meeting of their constituents [cheers], in order to ascertain what the British and Foreign School Society intend to do. Then another thing is stated in the paper of yesterday, namely, that in the report which I read in this hall last year, which was moved by Mr. Baines, and seconded by some other gentleman, it was said that we were actually willing to receive Government money, and wanted only, I suppose, some such compromise as it is said the Wesleyans have recently entered into. Now it is utterly incorrect. We hope that the person who wrote that article, and one of last Friday, has merely heard the report, and not looked into it. We wish to be charitable, but it is a fact that nothing of the kind was thought of; that the very existence of the Congregational Board of Education took its rise from this, because the British and Foreign School Society took Government money, and the very constitution of the Congregational Board of Education is, that no Government money can be touched, and the writer has committed the blunder in consequence of the allusion made to the fact that the Borough-road school had taken the money. He has clearly confounded the two; he has made the blunder, but it is on his own side [cheers]. Yesterday there was an article in the *Times*, suppressing all the facts that would tell against their views. It was a much more temperate article than those which had hitherto appeared in that journal, but I understand that there is a worse this morning. There is only one other point to which I would call attention. There is much now said as to Mr. Baines's calculation being erroneous, relative to the money that will be required in support of these schools, and when we are told that the lavish expenditure, of which we complain, is all in our own imagination, of course there are many persons who believe it. I wish to put one or two facts rightly before you bearing on the point. You know that a schoolmaster having a hundred children under his care, paying three-pence each per week, receives £60. Now, for this school the Government says to the master, at once, independently of all other sources of emolument, you shall have four pupil teachers. That would be £60

more—you shall have four stipendiary monitors, the average of which, at four years, is £8 15s., making £35, so that any master of a school with one hundred children is entitled to £95, after he gets £60 from the children, and without one penny of voluntary contribution from any one of you. Double the number—say that his salary is £120. We can then claim from the Government £190 in addition to that sum. It is said this will not destroy the voluntary principle; nothing, however, can be clearer than the fact that where you have got three or four hundred children in a school, no voluntary money will be wanted. Some of you have seen a resolution, signed by Sir Edward North Buxton, regarding a school in Spitalfields. That school contains seven hundred children—the master of it will be entitled to claim from the Government between £600 and £700, to say nothing of the £400 which he gets from the pence of the children. There will be no necessity for any voluntary contributions, and there would be no thought of such a thing [cheers]. I feel, however, that I am intruding on the meeting, and I will not add another word.

Dr. R. W. HAMILTON said: I do not know where to begin. I am sure I have no idea where I shall end [laughter]. I have lately given lectures, all of which have exceeded two hours. I have made speeches, all of which have endured fifty minutes. Which will you have? [cry of "Both."] I did not catch the reply [cries of "Both, both"]. Both! We shall not land, then, within three hours [laughter]. As I am called upon, Mr. Chairman, to speak, I will avoid, therefore, everything of the oratorical, which sometimes intrudes in the lectures, and generally in the address, and as Thomas Moore once claimed to be crowned with laurels for the lay he sung, "That time had a moral," what think you, even, of a practical and a statistical speech even from me. I will call the attention, therefore, of this assembly, to a very popular dogma, namely, that crime is the test and exponent of education or ignorance—that according to the amount of crime, is the proportion of ignorance or of education. I think that this can be easily overturned. We are carried away by it, as we have been by many a theoretical principle, which merely requires to be sifted, and then it will be for ever destroyed. For years we were informed that the ratio of wages must be regulated by the price of food. It entered into the mind of every man, into the calculations of every man, an axiom, perfectly indisputable. It was suggested, however, as a more natural and more philosophical test, that the ratio of wages should respect the demand of labour, and not the price of food, and I suppose every man in a sound mind now admits that principle. Crime and ignorance go together—virtue and education go together. Now, do not look upon these as equivocal propositions. The affirmation of the one would not be the affirmation of the other. If crime and ignorance invariably proceeded *pari passu*, it would not follow that virtue and education did. But, let us look to crime. Which is the more probable of the two propositions that I have mentioned? 1837 and 1844 are years considerably distant from each other, I need not inform you; but the committals upon the whole population of England, in 1837, were 24,000. In 1844, it was the same; but the population had increased from about 10 to 12½ per cent in that time; therefore, you have more population and you have the same committals. Therefore, must not 1844 have greatly advanced in knowledge and in virtue upon 1837? But this is one of the presumed grounds of the measure that there is such a want of educative application and apparatus in the country. That we very clearly deny; for, in allusion to the terms of political economy which have been already used, I may say the supply is now greater than the demand in very many sections of the country. We could build a school at once contiguous to our place of worship—we have the money—we have the spirit to do it—we could find masters—we have books. What do we want? Why, the steeple school children. But now let us take the general committals, as they have been given to us in 1846. In England it is 1 in 5,664 of the inhabitants; in Ireland it is 1 in 6,244; but now in Scotland—religiously-educated Scotland—it is 1 in 4,495 [hear, hear]. I understand, therefore, that Ireland is the best, England is the second best, and Scotland the worst of all [hear, hear]. So far, then, facts and figures go against that very common and that very shadowy dogma, "Tell me the crime of a country, and I can tell you the extent or the limitation of its education." Will gentlemen allow me now to refer to what I believe to be the occasion of the measure itself? I have always been committing an error hitherto in speaking of it. I have said the bill, correcting myself. But there was so much of constitutionalism in me, that I could not conceive of anything national and parliamentary but by bill; but I am now schooled into measures, schemes, and Minutes of the Privy Council [hear, hear].

Mr. J. H. HINTON: The Austrian Privy Council.

Dr. HAMILTON: I gladly accept the correction, but a correction should be made in as loud a voice as that in which the error was spoken [laughter]. I now proceed to speak of the ground or the occasion of this measure. It is supposed to be very philanthropic. I asperse no man's motive—I can read no man's heart; but there is some exigency—the want of education. We are told Ministers are too truthful, too righteous to over-look the wants of the people, but may it not be that there was a very great prejudice against a certain cabinet when it was introduced. May it not be that that cabinet was necessarily bound to purchase some sweet voices—was it not to conciliate—must it not be a little stoop to win over to its side? I do not think the former Cabinet would have invented four new bishops, but Whigs are always liberal [laughter]. I do not think that a former Cabinet would have come to the rescue of a national system, but Whigs are always profuse. In a former Cabinet you were always obliged to thrust business upon them, but Whigs always carve out their own business. The former Cabinet ran their heads frequently against a wall, but Whigs always build walls to run their heads against [laughter and loud cheers]. Now, then, to shew the bankrupt state and utter insolvency of national schools, I take no rumour, though many clergymen are my per-

sonal friends, and they have communicated the secret to me that they were at a dead lock. But I take now the report of the factory inspector, a well-known gentleman, Mr. F. Watkins, and I find in his report concerning the Northern Schools, such an account as this, that there is a great deficiency of the funds for supporting our elementary schools in the northern districts. There is the secret of all. But once more—this, as you will remember, is from an appointed inspector, that in nine cases out of ten all the responsibility of supporting and conducting the school rests upon the clergyman of the parish or the district [laughter]. No wonder that the Whigs could make their peace with the Established Church, no longer rich, no longer able to obtain credit, but they were absolutely unable to pay their way. Then I impugn no man's motive, but when I read an act, I must read a principle, and I say because this national system could not uphold itself, the Whigs have purchased its patronage and its influence by propping it up [laughter]. And I believe that, though we may go very far into the hidden springs of conduct, nothing is more obvious than this, that it is a compromise—a compromise between the Established Church and the Whigs, throwing us, their old, well-tried friends, the Dissenters, overboard [cheers]. It is a mere delusion, a mockery, and a snare. It begins so, it continues so, and so it will conclude. The more I look into it I wonder at it as a farago of ignorance,—I was going to say imposture,—but I want a softer word, the art of imposing. Now, Mr. Chairman, having just followed up what I was called upon to do, just having taken my place in what I hope is a long line of succession, I throw these remarks before the meeting. I wish them to weigh all the arguments; I wish them to weigh all the arithmetic; and to see how completely men have been taken up with false theories, and how necessary it is even upon the most common question of numbers, to try whether those numbers that really stand before you allow the product [loud cheers].

Mr. J. A. JAMES having been called for, rose, and said: I came here not to speak; however, I am not ashamed nor afraid to say a few things. I am most unhappily placed in juxtaposition with my friend Dr. Hamilton, though I had the honour of having that station assigned me in the *Times* of yesterday, very unworthily [cries of "Very honourably"]. I do deplore the necessity existing for it, but I do rejoice in the meeting itself [hear, hear]. I deplore it, not merely on account of what may be the ultimate results of the object which we now contemplate, but I deplore it on account of the influence it may have upon our own spirits. I am sorry for everything that separates me from any portion of the Christian community. I delight not in Dissent—I am a Dissenter by necessity. I like union. I am a member, at the present moment, of a great union progressing, and I do, in some measure, feel happy in being here to prove that very connexion with the Evangelical Alliance does not prevent me from the temperate, firm expression of my denominational principles [cheers]. That confederation binds us, not to the desertion of truth, but to the elevation of charity; and I maintain that these two are compatible, the one with the other [hear, hear]. I am happy to find that there are some things that can unite the great body of Protestant Dissenters [hear, hear]; that, though we cannot be all, according to the present views we take of the matter, members of an Anti-state-church Society, we can be members of an Anti-state-school society [hear, hear]; therefore I am happy to meet so many on the present occasion, and I would ask all those who are the supporters of the Government measure of education, who are the railers against those who oppose it, whether appealing to the history of Protestant Dissenters, on their known attachment to education, it must not be, in their view, a matter of dire necessity that should call them out against a measure that puts forward education as its object. There is this in the view which I have just presented which ought to impress the public mind. When we, who, through our whole history, have been the known advocates of education, do now stand forward and array ourselves against a system which is proposed for general adoption, there must be something in that system that appears highly objectionable, or we could not possibly subject ourselves to the imputation, as it has been imputed to us, of being unfriendly to education. Our whole history proves that this is but a groundless accusation; we having raised, since the introduction of Sir James Graham's measure, and its defeat, by one single section of the body, £120,000 for the building of school-rooms; yet, notwithstanding this, we have been placarded through the country as enemies of education. We rebut the charge, we throw off the imputation, and stand forward in the very array which we present against the measure, as a firm phalanx in defence of education itself [cheers]. We are told that the voluntary principle is not sufficient of itself to maintain the education of the country. Perhaps it may not; and though we are all agreed in opposition to the measure of the Government, there are shades of difference on that topic which still exist amongst us. But we do not, on that ground, for one moment retire from each other, and we come forward and take our stand in heart, and voice, and soul, against the measure of the Government [cheers]. And why, after all, is it? In fact, it might be asked fairly, Why is not the voluntary principle itself sufficient for the education of the people? Why, because there is not a will to work that principle. There is wealth enough for it. It therefore comes back to this,—that the people are not willing to give their wealth. We say that we Dissenters are ready to come forward and tax our resources to the utmost for education, and we challenge those who are opposed to us to do the same [cheers]. Now I beg to ask, Who are the sincerest friends to education—those who are willing, to the uttermost of their power, to pay for it out of their own pockets, or those who will not come forward unless the Government assist them [cheers]. That appears to me to be the position in which we are placed. I for one, do not scruple to say, that if the Government had come forward and repudiated religious education, saying "We have nothing to do with this, we will only take up secular education [cries of "No, no!"] I should have

felt much greater difficulty than I now do in opposing the measure presented to the public. Gentlemen have their own opinions, and I have mine [hear, hear]. But I come back to the other position. This is *bona fide* a religious education, and on that ground I oppose it just as I do a State Church. It is an establishment of schools as the other is an establishment in the buildings called a Church, and I took the liberty to say recently at a meeting in Birmingham, that it never was designed as such by its concoctors. I am confident it must be a satellite of the Establishment drawing its splendour and light from the State luminary and all for the advancement of the primary [cheers]. We are here to see what we can do to arrest the measure. The eyes of England are upon us; and I trust we shall conduct ourselves this day in a way that will reflect honour upon us in the opposition to the Government measure which we are met to carry forward. I confess that when Sir James Graham's measure was in progress, there were many things said at public meetings which I have never ceased to deplore to the present day. Hitherto, throughout the whole of the opposition to this measure, the great body of the Protestant Dissenters appear to me to have conducted themselves in a way that reflects great credit upon them. They have been firm, but temperate, and, for one, I will not myself impugn the motives of those by whom the measure has been introduced. I will not resolve the whole into statecraft or priestcraft. I have nothing to do with men's motives—simply with their acts, and believing as I do the measure to be fraught with incalculable mischief, and that it is not likely to accomplish all that its most sanguine friends may have led them to expect, I am here with my friends to give the measure my enlightened, determined, and uncompromising opposition [loud cheers].

Mr. R. RYLAND, of Bradford, said: I confess that I feel jealous for the honour of the old Presbyterian denomination, and it is more on public ground like that rather than from any personal or local consideration, that I wish to occupy the meeting for a very few moments. It is with great pleasure that I add a few words to what has been said by a neighbour of my own from Leeds, and by a former neighbour at Birmingham. It gave me peculiar pleasure, and I hope it will serve in some degree to redeem the honour of our Presbyterian forefathers—for belonging to that denomination I must be the last person to speak of others—I must only speak for myself—it gave me peculiar pleasure to find that Mr. James was seconded by one of our own ministers, at Birmingham, in that great meeting, the largest known to be held in the Town-hall there, and which ended I believe in the scale being turned in favour of liberty on that spot, where, above all others, that scale should have been turned—that spot upon which the great precursor and ancestor of all of us, on the subject of religious liberty, suffered the dire effects of the violation of that principle [hear, hear]. But I think it will be more useful in a meeting like this for each of us to contribute, as far as we can, any information from his own particular neighbourhood, as to what has been done and said, and perhaps also as to what has been misrepresented. As I came to town yesterday, I felt indignant at a misrepresentation occurring in one of the London papers. I read in the *Daily News* what I regard as an augury of our growing strength and final victory. When I see a kind of profligacy of sentiment in the periodical press, on the greatest of all subjects—religion, I feel I hope a just indignation, and I feel tenfold more the importance of the struggle for liberty, and that religion and education which is the substance of religion should not be damaged by this measure. But to return to my own district, and to state a few particulars from the place from which I come. It was our intention, at Bradford, to take advantage of the presence of one or two of our representatives that they might be delegates to the meeting, but the truth still needs to be diffused. Freedom began in the north, and has proceeded both in the large scale and the small; and, in the Western Riding, in which we may congratulate ourselves that this seed of a great truth has developed itself. One of our best representatives proposed that we should come in double and treble strength to support this meeting. Five delegates, therefore, have come from Bradford on this subject [cheers], and we do not think it is too many. The *Daily News* states that, at Bradford, the working classes assembled to the number of 1,500, and declared in favour of the Government plan, *minus* six. If we had another delegate here, we should have heard that they were the six [laughter]. The truth is, we have had meeting upon meeting in Bradford. Every denomination is in strict alliance there, and working together. I suppose I am not out of order in reckoning the Wesleyans in Bradford amongst our number. We have had a Sabbath-school teachers' meeting of every denomination—we have had a town petition to which the names of every communion are attached. We are also having a memorial to our honoured representative, who we firmly believe has had nothing to do with the getting up of the Minutes of Council [hear, hear]. I hope, for the honour of our own town, it will be known that we are in every respect strong and united on this great subject. I cannot but share in the opinion of some gentlemen who have preceded me, that this scheme is but a repetition—an echo—of a former scheme of some years ago [hear, hear]. It convinces my mind more and more, that even if we admit education is within the province of the Government, which I most emphatically deny [cheers], we could not adopt this scheme. Many perhaps may say, that because I am a neighbour of Mr. Baines's I follow in his wake; but, so far from this being the case, I have, from the moment I received my own college education, maintained the views that I now hold. Four years ago, I did all in my power to instil the principle, and inspire the resolution, that, while we loved knowledge, we would hold liberty at a much higher rate. I was afraid there would be no representative of the honest race of Presbyterians in this company. I hope there are; and I hope every man present will open his mouth on this great occasion. I do believe, that though we may be traduced, and called fanatics, yet we are at a crisis—that we are beginning to turn back the streams which have brought us to the proud position in which we stand among the nations of the earth [hear, hear].

I cannot restrain myself when I perceive those who profess to be the friends of the people losing sight of the principles that I think greater than all. It is for this reason that I stand here, namely, that I may answer for myself, if I may not answer for others [cheers].

Dr. MASSIE brought up a report from the Business Committee, consisting of a series of resolutions, which, as they were afterwards moved and seconded *seriatim*, we introduce in their proper order.

Mr. CHARLES REED moved the adoption of the report.

Mr. ROBERTS, of Plaistow, in seconding the report, said: I am not a minister, but one of the people, and I am anxious that the people should not only have the opportunity of expressing their opinion in a great meeting like this, but that they should know and estimate their own privileges, and come forward to express them. I do not wish all the speaking to be confined to the ministers, any more than I wish all the thinking to be limited to them [cheers]. I am desirous that this Conference should express the opinions, not of dissenters merely, but of the people of England generally, and this is the main point to which I wish to direct your attention in this early stage of the business of the meeting. I apprehend this is not entirely a Dissenters question. It is so in some respects, because no doubt, if the measure passes, the young people will to a great extent be placed under the surveillance of the clergy. But I apprehend that the Church people—and I do not mean by the church, the clergy or the bishops only, but the people of England who are members of that Church—are as much interested in upsetting that obnoxious and abominable measure, as any others. I apprehend that, under this plan of education, the acorn, instead of springing forth, shooting down its root, and sending up a tree with its magnificent branches, will be enclosed in a coffin, and thus the growth of mind be prevented. It is an admirable scheme for instructing children in their A. B. C., and for giving them a knowledge of arithmetic, but it is a scheme for fettering, in short for destroying, all forethought. In that view of the question the whole people of England, including those connected with the Church of England, are as much interested in putting it down as we are. I hope that before long they will become alive to this important question. Where will you find a people better instructed in reading and arithmetic than in Prussia, but where will you find a people more slavish? [hear, hear]. It is true that there are a great many learned men in that part of Europe, who have had their minds expanded, and who think for themselves, but the common people are mere clodhoppers [laughter]. These do not think, or if they do, they must not give expression to their opinions. If the system of inspectors now proposed by our Government be introduced, they will say what books shall, and shall not be read, and thus real learning will be obstructed. I add no more—the main point for which I rose was, to express the feelings of my own mind that this is not a Dissenters question, but a question affecting the welfare of the whole people of England; no Government system of education should for a moment be permitted [cheers].

The report was then adopted.

The following resolution was then put and carried:—

That the Rev. J. H. Hinton, Rev. Dr. Massie, and George Leman, Esq., be requested to act as secretaries to the Conference.

The CHAIRMAN then read the second resolution, as follows:—

That the business committee be charged generally with the arrangement of the business of the Conference, and that all notices of substantive motions shall, for convenience, be referred to it, before being read from the chair.

Mr. J. BLACKMAN inquired whether the Committee were to have a vote upon the motions presented before them [cries of "No, no"]. He thought that gentlemen comprising the meeting were as competent to form a judgment upon a resolution as the Committee up stairs.

JOSEPH CONDER, Esq., said, that the only object in having the resolutions presented to the Committee was, to have them brought forward in their right order. It was not intended to give the Committee a *veto*, but to prevent desultory motions.

Dr. MASSIE said, that the language of the resolution was guarded. It was expressly stated, that it was for convenience that the motions were to be submitted to the committee. If resolutions were thrown in during the discussion on other resolutions, it would produce confusion. The Committee did not assume or presume to exercise the power of vetoing any resolution that might be laid before them. There might be a resolution presented to them which they would think questionable, and in that case they would confer with the party proposing it, but if they did not succeed in inducing him to withdraw it then it must come before the meeting in a certain order. Of course it would be open to every gentleman to propose an amendment to a resolution if he thought proper.

The motion was then put and carried, with a few dissentients.

The following resolution was then unanimously adopted:—

That an enrolment Committee be appointed, consisting of Messrs. Katterns, Crellin, jun., and Pratt.

The following resolution was then agreed to:—

That Messrs. G. W. Alexander, W. G. Lewis, Tillet, of Norwich, James James, of Birmingham, and Mr. Morris, of Manchester, be appointed a financial Committee.

It was then agreed that the Conference should meet at ten o'clock in the morning, and adjourn at four o'clock in the afternoon, and also that all speakers observe the rules of parliamentary discussion, and that the Chairman should enforce the same.

Dr. MASSIE suggested that an interview should be sought with the Marquis of Lansdowne on Thursday next, and that a deputation from the Conference should be appointed to wait upon him.

After some desultory discussion, it was agreed that a deputation should wait upon the noble marquis, but the time was not fixed.

A question then arose as to the propriety of adjourning the Conference until half-past twelve o'clock on the following day, in order to allow members of the Conference an opportunity of calling upon their respective representatives in Parliament, with a view of com-

municating to them the wish of their constituents, that they should oppose this measure. Several gentlemen expressed their opinion as to the necessity of constituents pressing upon members their sentiments on this question, but thought that the Conference might assemble at ten o'clock. The following resolution was then put and carried unanimously:—

That all members of this Conference, who are electors, be requested to wait upon their representatives in Parliament, and to report the result of the interviews to the Committee.

The following resolution was then agreed to:—

3. That the Conference solicit an interview with members of the House of Commons, whether liberal or otherwise, at Brown's-hotel, to-morrow evening, at five o'clock.

Mr. JAMES then rose to move the first of a series of declaratory resolutions. It was to the following effect:—

1. That this Conference appeals to many well-known facts in proof of the affirmation, that the Protestant Dissenters of Great Britain have ever been among the most zealous promoters of popular education, that they long strove for its advancement almost alone, discouraged, and opposed; and that to the present period they have been and are its steadfast and devoted friends.

Mr. CHARLES STOVEL seconded the resolution.

Dr. HAMILTON suggested that, as the Conference was now coming to the consideration of declaratory resolutions, it was desirable that gentlemen should fully express their sentiments upon them. I am anxious, he said, that all concessions and apologies should be dealt with fairly by the public. I have often said that the Voluntary principle was not efficient, it was not worked out. Now, such concessions are pleaded against me as though I had said that there was inefficiency in the principle itself. We cannot say a candid thing, without its being urged that we are compromising our principles. I say the same of religion that I have said of the Voluntary principle. Religion is perfect, but, acting through the infirmity of our nature, it is imperfect [hear, hear,] and the Voluntary principle acting through an imperfect medium, is imperfect therefore in its operations. But if Christians would work Christianity, and Voluntaries would work Voluntarism, Christianity would have perfect effect, and Voluntarism would have perfect triumph [cheers].

Mr. R. AINSIE thought that the Conference could not be better employed than in discussing the resolutions as they now came down from the Business Committee.

Mr. J. BURNET, in suggesting a slight verbal alteration in the resolution, which was agreed to by the mover and seconder, went on to observe: With regard to the necessity of passing such a resolution in connexion with the Government Plan of Education, I suppose there is no one present that will entertain any doubt as to the ground of that necessity. An attempt has been made by the Committee of Council on Education to take the whole of the rising mind of the country into their own hands. The question is not whether the rising population are to be educated—they are being educated—education is extending largely, and it was only when the Government found that that was the case that they got up this Committee of Council [cheers]. This is quite a new thing. They surely, whoever might be in the field first, have come last. There can be no question about that, and it was when the education of the country was making rapid progress that they thought that so much good should not be done except under their hands [laughter]. It was not, therefore, from a conviction of the necessity of educating the country that they started into being. It was from the conviction that, if they did not join in the race, they might be left behind in their influence over the rising generation [loud laughter]. They have shown that this was their purpose, by the very wide range they have taken in the Minutes of Council. Why do they go into the whole length and breadth of the working of society? They are going to teach the rising generation to read, write, and cipher; and, moreover, to learn the Church Catechism—the worst catechism I know in the world. But they are going to take a step further, and to meddle with all the working and all the perplexities of social life [loud cheers]. They are to make artisans—they are to make farmers—they are to make washerwomen [laughter]—for that, also, is in the Minutes. They begin, therefore, with the highest point of education—religion, and they come down to the lowest, if I may so call it, though it is a very necessary one—the washing-tub [laughter and cheers]. Why, there is not a servant-maid that will come out in the community now till she has learned, under the sanction of the Privy Council, to wash her nightcap [laughter]. I regard this minute meddling with legislation to be more dangerous than any step that has been taken in modern times. I do think that the British Government might have aided in the education of the country—might have encouraged voluntary institutions, if they are determined to aid them,—without entering into these points. I have been compelled to ask why this wide range of meddling? Why, what is to spring from legislation if the Government are to proceed in this way? [hear, hear.] But I am wrong in calling it legislation [cheers]. It is not; it does not come from the Parliament of this country. It comes from a Committee appointed under the authority of the Crown, against the constitutionality of which the House of Lords protested, and against the constitutionality of which a noble minority of the House of Commons protested. Why, if this Committee of Council on Education is to be allowed to take this wide range over the whole surface of the community, and to touch the springs of the rising generation, and to touch the interests and feelings of all the instructors of the rising generation, where are they to stop? This is a modern Star-chamber [cheers]. They, too, were appointed by the authority of the Crown. If it should be said, there may be an opportunity given for a vote in Parliament (I allow all this) when the money is proposed, we thank them even for so much. They would not give us that if they could keep it out of our way [hear, hear]; but let it be remembered, that when a single vote is to determine a question, the country has no opportunity of considering it. If, as by the sound of a bell, the voters are called in at once to say yea or nay, the country has no means which it can bring in to tell upon such a system. Yes, they have means; and this Committee of Council, I have no doubt, will bring these means into operation. The

country have the means of making a new Parliament [cheers]. Let no individual vote for any gentleman that will not at once pledge himself to the revocation of this order in Council [cheers]. It may be said, members do not like to pledge themselves. It may be so; and I am not an advocate for sending a member disgraced, tied hand and foot, to be my trumpet in the House of Commons. That would degrade any man, and the man that would submit to it is not fit to be a legislator in any country [hear, hear]. But there is a great difference between this and a man telling us what he will do on a grand point that spreads over the whole empire. I do not ask him to come and pledge himself, but to tell me what is his principle, and whether he will act it out, and whether he will tell the community that sends him that, on these great topics he agrees with them. If a man cannot do this, he can have no vote from me [cheers]. But let us beware lest we encourage this mode of minute legislation in this instance. I look upon the Minutes of Council as the most alarming production that we have had in this or any other matter for many generations [cheers]. When Government have touched everything, what has been the result? The people have been enslaved. If, Sir, you were placed at the head of an institution, and you had the training of all the youth connected with it, what would be consistency of your character or conduct, if you did not train them according to your mind? Let the rulers rule, and they will teach the governed simply to obey. I think that no Government is fitted to train the rising generation. The true and proper province of Government is to prevent us from doing injury one to another. They are an excellent preventive service while they keep within their own province, but the moment they come as an executive, to meddle with all the links of society, they will create a perplexity which will at last frighten themselves, or, if they succeed, they will transform their Government into a despotism and their subjects into slaves [loud cheers].

Mr. FLETCHER observed: A gentleman has said that this is not merely a Dissenters' Conference, but one in which the entire community in Great Britain and Ireland is represented. I think we should have a clear understanding as to whether we appear here as Dissenters, or as the opponents of the Government measure. Of course Dissenters oppose it, and some who are not Dissenters also oppose it. If we shape our resolutions according to the position in which we place ourselves, I contend that the resolution now proposed—although I approve of it—is not the first that ought to come before us.

Dr. MASSIE said: In answer to Mr. Fletcher's reasonable inquiries, I beg to say that the Committee did not come with resolutions prepared for the meeting. They were appointed by the meeting, that they might proceed to prepare such business as the meeting required. The gentlemen who have acted as the Central Committee have abstained altogether from any preliminary arrangements, lest it should be said that the London people had dictated to those from the provinces. The resolution now proposed having been the first agreed upon by the Committee it was sent to this meeting for consideration. It has not been determined that this should be a Nonconformist Conference, but that it should assume whatever character the Conference pleased. There are resolutions here that are as universal as Catholicity itself [cheers] in objection to the scheme of Government, which I believe that our excellent friends are prepared to lay before you: if they are incomplete, you can complete them [cheers].

Mr. R. RYLAND said, we are summoned as opponents to the general scheme of education: it may be that we have conforming opponents present, and I hope that we have. I would, therefore, suggest that our first resolution should affirm the generality of our assembly.

Dr. HAMILTON stated that he was sent as one of the deputation from the Committee of the West Riding of Yorkshire, in which Dissenters preponderated, but in which they were not known, for it was a general body.

After a few desultory remarks, Rev. J. H. HINTON brought up a further report from the business Committee, consisting of a series of resolutions. The adoption of the report was moved by Mr. C. STOVEL, seconded by Mr. CHARLES REED, and carried unanimously.

Mr. J. A. JAMES again rose, and re-proposed the resolution given above. We there claim, he said, the honour of being the friends of education; let us, in our future career, under whatever discouraging circumstances we may be placed by the legislature (should this measure pass), show that we are still determined to adhere to the cause of popular education.

Mr. CHARLES STOVEL, in again seconding the resolution, said, my impression is that, if anything is required in order to support the affirmation in the resolution, it is to be found at page 5 of a work entitled, "The School in relation to the State, the Church, and the Congregation," which seems to be a document defending the Government measure. It is stated there, not only that your Sabbath Schools have taken the lead in this measure, but have also afforded the very type to be followed in the movement of the Government measure. I am inclined to think that that concession is decisive evidence not only that you have, as Dissenters, occupied an important place, but that the result of your labours has been felt by the Government [hear, hear].

Dr. HAMILTON: I shall preface this resolution with very few remarks. I hardly know how to regret the introduction of this scheme. It has brought a great question before the national mind, and it has set the national mind thinking upon it. I think there has been ("forgive me this wrong!") considerable immaturity of the Ministerial mind, and I think the Ministerial mind is now set thinking about it. I believe many have advanced, and I am quite sure that none have receded. Whatever may be the victory or the defeat, we shall close our part in the one or in the other with sustained character and repute. We have lost nothing. Indeed, I am glad to see the perfect coherence of our body—our bodies, to-day [laughter and cheers]. We have got all the B's [laughter], I believe, with us. We all know that the bees are sometimes very active, and at other times very drowsy and honeyless [laughter and cheers]. I believe we have got all the V's with

more—you shall have four stipendiary monitors, the average of which, at four years, is £8 15s., making £35, so that any master of a school with one hundred children is entitled to £95, after he gets £60 from the children, and without one penny of voluntary contribution from any one of you. Double the number—say that his salary is £120. We can then claim from the Government £190 in addition to that sum. It is said this will not destroy the voluntary principle; nothing, however, can be clearer than the fact that where you have got three or four hundred children in a school, no voluntary money will be wanted. Some of you have seen a resolution, signed by Sir Edward North Buxton, regarding a school in Spitalfields. That school contains seven hundred children—the master of it will be entitled to claim from the Government between £600 and £700, to say nothing of the £400 which he gets from the pence of the children. There will be no necessity for any voluntary contributions, and there would be no thought of such a thing [cheers]. I feel, however, that I am intruding on the meeting, and I will not add another word.

Dr. R. W. HAMILTON said: I do not know where to begin. I am sure I have no idea where I shall end [laughter]. I have lately given lectures, all of which have exceeded two hours. I have made speeches, all of which have endured fifty minutes. Which will you have? [cry of "Both."] I did not catch the reply [cries of "Both, both"]. Both! We shall not land, then, within three hours [laughter]. As I am called upon, Mr. Chairman, to speak, I will avoid, therefore, everything of the oratorical, which sometimes intrudes in the lectures, and generally in the address, and as Thomas Moore once claimed to be crowned with laurels for the lay he sung, "That time had a moral," what think you, even, of a practical and a statistical speech even from me. I will call the attention, therefore, of this assembly, to a very popular dogma, namely, that crime is the test and exponent of education or ignorance—that according to the amount of crime, is the proportion of ignorance or of education. I think that this can be easily overturned. We are carried away by it, as we have been by many a theoretical principle, which merely requires to be sifted, and then it will be for ever destroyed. For years we were informed that the ratio of wages must be regulated by the price of food. It entered into the mind of every man, into the calculations of every man, an axiom, perfectly indisputable. It was suggested, however, as a more natural and more philosophical test, that the ratio of wages should respect the demand of labour, and not the price of food, and I suppose every man in a sound mind now admits that principle. Crime and ignorance go together—virtue and education go together. Now, do not look upon these as equivocal propositions. The affirmation of the one would not be the affirmation of the other. If crime and ignorance invariably proceeded *pari passu*, it would not follow that virtue and education did. But, let us look to crime. Which is the more probable of the two propositions that I have mentioned? 1837 and 1844 are years considerably distant from each other, I need not inform you; but the committals upon the whole population of England, in 1837, were 24,000. In 1844, it was the same; but the population had increased from about 10 to 12½ per cent in that time; therefore, you have more population and you have the same committals. Therefore, must not 1844 have greatly advanced in knowledge and in virtue upon 1837? But this is one of the presumed grounds of the measure that there is such a want of educatory application and apparatus in the country. That we very clearly deny; for, in allusion to the terms of political economy which have been already used, I may say the supply is now greater than the demand in very many sections of the country. We could build a school at once contiguous to our place of worship—we have the money—we have the spirit to do it—we could find masters—we have books. What do we want? Why, the steeple school children. But now let us take the general committals, as they have been given to us in 1845. In England it is 1 in 5,564 of the inhabitants; in Ireland it is 1 in 6,244; but now in Scotland—religiously-educated Scotland—it is 1 in 4,495 [hear, hear]. I understand, therefore, that Ireland is the best, England is the second best, and Scotland the worst of all [hear, hear]. So far, then, facts and figures go against that very common and that very shadowy dogma, "Tell me the crime of a country, and I can tell you the extent or the limitation of its education." Will gentlemen allow me now to refer to what I believe to be the occasion of the measure itself? I have always been committing an error hitherto in speaking of it. I have said the bill, correcting myself. But there was so much of constitutionalism in me, that I could not conceive of anything national and parliamentary but by bill; but I am now schooled into measures, schemes, and Minutes of the Privy Council [hear, hear].

Mr. J. H. HINTON: The Austrian Privy Council.

Dr. HAMILTON: I gladly accept the correction, but a correction should be made in as loud a voice as that in which the error was spoken [laughter]. I now proceed to speak of the ground or the occasion of this measure. It is supposed to be very philanthropic. I asperse no man's motive—I can read no man's heart; but there is some exigency—the want of education. We are told Ministers are too truthful, too righteous to over-look the wants of the people, but may it not be that there was a very great prejudice against a certain cabinet when it was introduced. May it not be that that cabinet was necessarily bound to purchase some sweet voices—was it not to conciliate—must it not be a little stoop to win over to its side? I do not think the former Cabinet would have invented four new bishops, but Whigs are always liberal [laughter]. I do not think that a former Cabinet would have come to the rescue of a national system, but Whigs are always profuse. In a former Cabinet you were always obliged to thrust business upon them, but Whigs always carve out their own business. The former Cabinet ran their heads frequently against a wall, but Whigs always build walls to run their heads against [laughter and loud cheers]. Now, then, to shew the bankrupt state and utter insolvency of national schools, I take no rumour, though many clergymen are my per-

sonal friends, and they have communicated the secret to me that they were at a dead lock. But I take now the report of the factory inspector, a well-known gentleman, Mr. F. Watkins, and I find in his report concerning the Northern Schools, such an account as this, that there is a great deficiency of the funds for supporting our elementary schools in the northern districts. There is the secret of all. But once more—this, as you will remember, is from an appointed inspector, that in nine cases out of ten all the responsibility of supporting and conducting the school rests upon the clergyman of the parish or the district [laughter]. No wonder that the Whigs could make their peace with the Established Church, no longer rich, no longer able to obtain credit, but they were absolutely unable to pay their way. Then I impugn no man's motive, but when I read an act, I must read a principle, and I say because this national system could not uphold itself, the Whigs have purchased its patronage and its influence by propping it up [laughter]. And I believe that, though we may go very far into the hidden springs of conduct, nothing is more obvious than this, that it is a compromise—a compromise between the Established Church and the Whigs, throwing us, their old, well-trying friends, the Dissenters, overboard [cheers]. It is a mere delusion, a mockery, and a snare. It begins so, it continues so, and so it will conclude. The more I look into it I wonder at it as a farago of ignorance,—I was going to say imposture,—but I want a softer word, the art of imposing. Now, Mr. Chairman, having just followed up what I was called upon to do, just having taken my place in what I hope is a long line of succession, I throw these remarks before the meeting. I wish them to weigh all the arguments; I wish them to weigh all the arithmetic; and to see how completely men have been taken up with false theories, and how necessary it is even upon the most common question of numbers, to try whether those numbers that really stand before you allow the product [loud cheers].

Mr. J. A. JAMES having been called for, rose, and said: I came here not to speak; however, I am not ashamed nor afraid to say a few things. I am most unhappily placed in juxtaposition with my friend Dr. Hamilton, though I had the honour of having that station assigned me in the *Times* of yesterday, very unworthily [cries of "Very honourably"]. I do deplore the necessity existing for it, but I do rejoice in the meeting itself [hear, hear]. I deplore it, not merely on account of what may be the ultimate results of the object which we now contemplate, but I deplore it on account of the influence it may have upon our own spirits. I am sorry for everything that separates me from any portion of the Christian community. I delight not in Dissent—I am a Dissenter by necessity. I like union. I am a member, at the present moment, of a great union progressing, and I do, in some measure, feel happy in being here to prove that very connexion with the Evangelical Alliance does not prevent me from the temperate, firm expression of my denominational principles [cheers]. That confederation binds us, not to the desertion of truth, but to the elevation of charity; and I maintain that these two are compatible, the one with the other [hear, hear]. I am happy to find that there are some things that can unite the great body of Protestant Dissenters [hear, hear]; that, though we cannot be all, according to the present views we take of the matter, members of an Anti-state-church Society, we can be members of an Anti-state-school society [hear, hear]; therefore I am happy to meet so many on the present occasion, and I would ask all those who are the supporters of the Government measure of education, who are the railers against those who oppose it, whether appealing to the history of Protestant Dissenters, on their known attachment to education, it must not be, in their view, a matter of dire necessity that should call them out against a measure that puts forward education as its object. There is this in the view which I have just presented which ought to impress the public mind. When we, who, through our whole history, have been the known advocates of education, do now stand forward and array ourselves against a system which is proposed for general adoption, there must be something in that system that appears highly objectionable, or we could not possibly subject ourselves to the imputation, as it has been imputed to us, of being unfriendly to education. Our whole history proves that this is but a groundless accusation; we having raised, since the introduction of Sir James Graham's measure, and its defeat, by one single section of the body, £120,000 for the building of school-rooms; yet, notwithstanding this, we have been placarded through the country as enemies of education. We rebut the charge, we throw off the imputation, and stand forward in the very array which we present against the measure, as a firm phalanx in defence of education itself [cheers]. We are told that the voluntary principle is not sufficient of itself to maintain the education of the country. Perhaps it may not; and though we are all agreed in opposition to the measure of the Government, there are shades of difference on that topic which still exist amongst us. But we do not, on that ground, for one moment retire from each other, and we come forward and take our stand in heart, and voice, and soul, against the measure of the Government [cheers]. And why, after all, is it? In fact, it might be asked fairly, Why is not the voluntary principle itself sufficient for the education of the people? Why, because there is not a will to work that principle. There is wealth enough for it. It therefore comes back to this,—that the people are not willing to give their wealth. We say that we Dissenters are ready to come forward and tax our resources to the utmost for education, and we challenge those who are opposed to us to do the same [cheers]. Now I beg to ask, Who are the sincerest friends to education—those who are willing, to the uttermost of their power, to pay for it out of their own pockets, or those who will not come forward unless the Government assist them [cheers]. That appears to me to be the position in which we are placed. I for one, do not scruple to say, that if the Government had come forward and repudiated religious education, saying "We have nothing to do with this, we will only take up secular education [cries of "No, no!"] I should have

felt much greater difficulty than I now do in opposing the measure presented to the public. Gentlemen have their own opinions, and I have mine [hear, hear]. But I come back to the other position. This is *bona fide* a religious education, and on that ground I oppose it just as I do a State Church. It is an establishment of schools as the other is an establishment in the buildings called a Church, and I took the liberty to say recently at a meeting in Birmingham, that it never was designed as such by its concoctors. I am confident it must be a satellite of the Establishment drawing its splendour and light from the State luminary and all for the advancement of the primary [cheers]. We are here to see what we can do to arrest the measure. The eyes of England are upon us; and I trust we shall conduct ourselves this day in a way that will reflect honour upon us in the opposition to the Government measure which we are met to carry forward. I confess that when Sir James Graham's measure was in progress, there were many things said at public meetings which I have never ceased to deplore to the present day. Hitherto, throughout the whole of the opposition to this measure, the great body of the Protestant Dissenters appear to me to have conducted themselves in a way that reflects great credit upon them. They have been firm, but temperate, and, for one, I will not myself impugn the motives of those by whom the measure has been introduced. I will not resolve the whole into statecraft or priestcraft. I have nothing to do with men's motives—simply with their acts, and believing as I do the measure to be fraught with incalculable mischief, and that it is not likely to accomplish all that its most sanguine friends may have led them to expect, I am here with my friends to give the measure my enlightened, determined, and uncompromising opposition [loud cheers].

Mr. R. RYLAND, of Bradford, said: I confess that I feel jealous for the honour of the old Presbyterian denomination, and it is more on public ground like that rather than from any personal or local consideration, that I wish to occupy the meeting for a very few moments. It is with great pleasure that I add a few words to what has been said by a neighbour of my own from Leeds, and by a former neighbour at Birmingham. It gave me peculiar pleasure, and I hope it will serve in some degree to redeem the honour of our Presbyterian forefathers—for belonging to that denomination I must be the last person to speak of others—I must only speak for myself—it gave me peculiar pleasure to find that Mr. James was seconded by one of our own ministers, at Birmingham, in that great meeting, the largest known to be held in the Town-hall there, and which ended I believe in the scale being turned in favour of liberty on that spot, where, above all others, that scale should have been turned—that spot upon which the great precursor and ancestor of all of us, on the subject of religious liberty, suffered the dire effects of the violation of that principle [hear, hear]. But I think it will be more useful in a meeting like this for each of us to contribute, as far as we can, any information from his own particular neighbourhood, as to what has been done and said, and perhaps also as to what has been misrepresented. As I came to town yesterday, I felt indignant at a misrepresentation occurring in one of the London papers. I read in the *Daily News* what I regard as an augury of our growing strength and final victory. When I see a kind of profligacy of sentiment in the periodical press, on the greatest of all subjects—religion, I feel I hope a just indignation, and I feel tenfold more the importance of the struggle for liberty, and that religion and education which is the substance of religion should not be damaged by this measure. But to return to my own district, and to state a few particulars from the place from which I come. It was our intention, at Bradford, to take advantage of the presence of one or two of our representatives that they might be delegates to the meeting, but the truth still needs to be diffused. Freedom began in the north, and has proceeded both in the large scale and the small; and, in the Western Riding, in which we may congratulate ourselves that this seed of a great truth has developed itself. One of our best representatives proposed that we should come in double and treble strength to support this meeting. Five delegates, therefore, have come from Bradford on this subject [cheers], and we do not think it is too many. The *Daily News* states that, at Bradford, the working classes assembled to the number of 1,500, and declared in favour of the Government plan, minus six. If we had another delegate here, we should have heard that they were the six [laughter]. The truth is, we have had meeting upon meeting in Bradford. Every denomination is in strict alliance there, and working together. I suppose I am not out of order in reckoning the Wesleyans in Bradford amongst our number. We have had a Sabbath-school teachers' meeting of every denomination—we have had a town petition to which the names of every communion are attached. We are also having a memorial to our honoured representative, who we firmly believe has had nothing to do with the getting up of the Minutes of Council [hear, hear]. I hope, for the honour of our own town, it will be known that we are in every respect strong and united on this great subject. I cannot but share in the opinion of some gentlemen who have preceded me, that this scheme is but a repetition—an echo—of a former scheme of some years ago [hear, hear]. It convinces my mind more and more, that even if we admit education is within the province of the Government, which I most emphatically deny [cheers], we could not adopt this scheme. Many perhaps may say, that because I am a neighbour of Mr. Baines's I follow in his wake; but, so far from this being the case, I have, from the moment I received my own college education, maintained the views that I now hold. Four years ago, I did all in my power to instil the principle, and inspire the resolution, that, while we loved knowledge, we would hold liberty at a much higher rate. I was afraid there would be no representative of the honest race of Presbyterians in this company. I hope there are; and I hope every man present will open his mouth on this great occasion. I do believe, that though we may be traduced, and called fanatics, yet we are at a crisis—that we are beginning to turn back the streams which have brought us to the proud position in which we stand among the nations of the earth [hear, hear].

I cannot restrain myself when I perceive those who profess to be the friends of the people losing sight of the principles that I think greater than all. It is for this reason that I stand here, namely, that I may answer for myself, if I may not answer for others [cheers].

Dr. MASSIE brought up a report from the Business Committee, consisting of a series of resolutions, which, as they were afterwards moved and seconded *seriatim*, we introduce in their proper order.

Mr. CHARLES REED moved the adoption of the report.

Mr. ROBERTS, of Plaistow, in seconding the report, said: I am not a minister, but one of the people, and I am anxious that the people should not only have the opportunity of expressing their opinion in a great meeting like this, but that they should know and estimate their own privileges, and come forward to express them. I do not wish all the speaking to be confined to the ministers, any more than I wish all the thinking to be limited to them [cheers]. I am desirous that this Conference should express the opinions, not of dissenters merely, but of the people of England generally, and this is the main point to which I wish to direct your attention in this early stage of the business of the meeting. I apprehend this is not entirely a Dissenters' question. It is so in some respects, because no doubt, if the measure passes, the young people will to a great extent be placed under the surveillance of the clergy. But I apprehend that the Church people—and I do not mean by the church, the clergy or the bishops only, but the people of England who are members of that Church—are as much interested in upsetting that obnoxious and abominable measure, as any others. I apprehend that, under this plan of education, the acorn, instead of springing forth, shooting down its root, and sending up a tree with its magnificent branches, will be enclosed in a coffin, and thus the growth of mind be prevented. It is an admirable scheme for instructing children in their A. B. C., and for giving them a knowledge of arithmetic, but it is a scheme for fettering, in short for destroying, all forethought. In that view of the question the whole people of England, including those connected with the Church of England, are as much interested in putting it down as we are. I hope that before long they will become alive to this important question. Where will you find a people better instructed in reading and arithmetic than in Prussia, but where will you find a people more slavish? [hear, hear]. It is true that there are a great many learned men in that part of Europe, who have had their minds expanded, and who think for themselves, but the common people are mere clodhoppers [laughter]. These do not think, or if they do, they must not give expression to their opinions. If the system of inspectors now proposed by our Government be introduced, they will say what books shall, and shall not be read, and thus real learning will be obstructed. I add no more—the main point for which I rose was, to express the feelings of my own mind that this is not a Dissenters' question, but a question affecting the welfare of the whole people of England; no Government system of education should for a moment be permitted [cheers].

The report was then adopted.

The following resolution was then put and carried:—

That the Rev. J. H. Hinton, Rev. Dr. Massie, and George Leman, Esq., be requested to act as secretaries to the Conference.

The CHAIRMAN then read the second resolution, as follows:—

That the business committee be charged generally with the arrangement of the business of the Conference, and that all notices of substantive motions shall, for convenience, be referred to it, before being read from the chair.

Mr. J. BLACKMAN inquired whether the Committee were to have a vote upon the motions presented before them [cries of "No, no"]. He thought that gentlemen comprising the meeting were as competent to form a judgment upon a resolution as the Committee up stairs.

JOSIAH CONDER, Esq., said, that the only object in having the resolutions presented to the Committee was, to have them brought forward in their right order. It was not intended to give the Committee a *veto*, but to prevent desultory motions.

Dr. MASSIE said, that the language of the resolution was guarded. It was expressly stated, that it was for convenience that the motions were to be submitted to the committee. If resolutions were thrown in during the discussion on other resolutions, it would produce confusion. The Committee did not assume or presume to exercise the power of vetoing any resolution that might be laid before them. There might be a resolution presented to them which they would think questionable, and in that case they would confer with the party proposing it, but if they did not succeed in inducing him to withdraw it then it must come before the meeting in a certain order. Of course it would be open to every gentleman to propose an amendment to a resolution if he thought proper.

The motion was then put and carried, with a few dissentients.

The following resolution was then unanimously adopted:—

That an enrolment Committee be appointed, consisting of Messrs. Katterns, Crellin, jun., and Pratt.

The following resolution was then agreed to:—

That Messrs. G. W. Alexander, W. G. Lewis, Tillett, of Norwich, James James, of Birmingham, and Mr. Morris, of Manchester, be appointed a financial Committee.

It was then agreed that the Conference should meet at ten o'clock in the morning, and adjourn at four o'clock in the afternoon, and also that all speakers observe the rules of parliamentary discussion, and that the Chairman should enforce the same.

Dr. MASSIE suggested that an interview should be sought with the Marquis of Lansdowne on Thursday next, and that a deputation from the Conference should be appointed to wait upon him.

After some desultory discussion, it was agreed that a deputation should wait upon the noble marquis, but the time was not fixed.

A question then arose as to the propriety of adjourning the Conference until half-past twelve o'clock on the following day, in order to allow members of the Conference an opportunity of calling upon their respective representatives in Parliament, with a view of com-

municating to them the wish of their constituents, that they should oppose this measure. Several gentlemen expressed their opinion as to the necessity of constituents pressing upon members their sentiments on this question, but thought that the Conference might assemble at ten o'clock. The following resolution was then put and carried unanimously:—

That all members of this Conference, who are electors, be requested to wait upon their representatives in Parliament, and to report the result of the interviews to the Committee.

The following resolution was then agreed to:—

3. That the Conference solicit an interview with members of the House of Commons, whether liberal or otherwise, at Brown's-hotel, to-morrow evening, at five o'clock.

Mr. JAMES then rose to move the first of a series of declaratory resolutions. It was to the following effect:—

1. That this Conference appeals to many well-known facts in proof of the affirmation, that the Protestant Dissenters of Great Britain have ever been among the most zealous promoters of popular education, that they long strove for its advancement almost alone, discouraged, and opposed; and that to the present period they have been and are its steadfast and devoted friends.

Mr. CHARLES STOVEL seconded the resolution.

Dr. HAMILTON suggested that, as the Conference was now coming to the consideration of declaratory resolutions, it was desirable that gentlemen should fully express their sentiments upon them. I am anxious, he said, that all concessions and apologies should be dealt with fairly by the public. I have often said that the Voluntary principle was not efficient, it was not worked out. Now, such concessions are pleaded against me as though I had said that there was inefficiency in the principle itself. We cannot say a candid thing, without its being urged that we are compromising our principles. I say the same of religion that I have said of the Voluntary principle. Religion is perfect, but, acting through the infirmity of our nature, it is imperfect, [hear, hear,] and the Voluntary principle acting through an imperfect medium, is imperfect therefore in its operations. But if Christians would work Christianity, and Voluntaries would work Voluntarism, Christianity would have perfect effect, and Voluntarism would have perfect triumph [cheers].

Mr. R. AINSIE thought that the Conference could not be better employed than in discussing the resolutions as they now came down from the Business Committee.

Mr. J. BURNET, in suggesting a slight verbal alteration in the resolution, which was agreed to by the mover and seconder, went on to observe: With regard to the necessity of passing such a resolution in connexion with the Government Plan of Education, I suppose there is no one present that will entertain any doubt as to the ground of that necessity. An attempt has been made by the Committee of Council on Education to take the whole of the rising mind of the country into their own hands. The question is not whether the rising population are to be educated—they are being educated—education is extending largely, and it was only when the Government found that that was the case that they got up this Committee of Council [cheers]. This is quite a new thing. They surely, whoever might be in the field first, have come last. There can be no question about that, and it was when the education of the country was making rapid progress that they thought that so much good should not be done except under their hands [laughter]. It was not, therefore, from a conviction of the necessity of educating the country that they started into being. It was from the conviction that, if they did not join in the race, they might be left behind in their influence over the rising generation [loud laughter]. They have shown that this was their purpose, by the very wide range they have taken in the Minutes of Council. Why do they go into the whole length and breadth of the working of society? They are going to teach the rising generation to read, write, and cypher; and, moreover, to learn the Church Catechism—the worst catechism I know in the world. But they are going to take a step further, and to meddle with all the working and all the perplexities of social life [loud cheers]. They are to make artizans—they are to make farmers—they are to make washerwomen [laughter]—for that, also, is in the Minutes. They begin, therefore, with the highest point of education—religion, and they come down to the lowest, if I may so call it, though it is a very necessary one—the washing-tub [laughter and cheers]. Why, there is not a servant-maid that will come out in the community now till she has learned, under the sanction of the Privy Council, to wash her nightcap [laughter]. I regard this minute meddling with legislation to be more dangerous than any step that has been taken in modern times. I do think that the British Government might have aided in the education of the country—might have encouraged voluntary institutions, if they are determined to aid them,—without entering into these points. I have been compelled to ask why this wide range of meddling? Why, what is to spring from legislation if the Government are to proceed in this way? [hear, hear.] But I am wrong in calling it legislation [cheers]. It is not; it does not come from the Parliament of this country. It comes from a Committee appointed under the authority of the Crown, against the constitutionality of which the House of Lords protested, and against the constitutionality of which a noble minority of the House of Commons protested. Why, if this Committee of Council on Education is to be allowed to take this wide range over the whole surface of the community, and to touch the springs of the rising generation, and to touch the interests and feelings of all the instructors of the rising generation, where are they to stop? This is a modern Star-chamber [cheers]. They, too, were appointed by the authority of the Crown. If it should be said, there may be an opportunity given for a vote in Parliament (I allow all this) when the money is proposed, we thank them even for so much. They would not give us that if they could keep it out of our way [hear, hear]; but let it be remembered, that when a single vote is to determine a question, the country has no opportunity of considering it. If, as by the sound of a bell, the voters are called in at once to say yea or nay, the country has no means which it can bring in to tell upon such a system. Yes, they have means; and this Committee of Council, I have no doubt, will bring these means into operation. The

country have the means of making a new Parliament [cheers]. Let no individual vote for any gentleman that will not at once pledge himself to the revocation of this order in Council [cheers]. It may be said, members do not like to pledge themselves. It may be so; and I am not an advocate for sending a member disgraced, tied hand and foot, to be my trumpet in the House of Commons. That would degrade any man, and the man that would submit to it is not fit to be a legislator in any country [hear, hear]. But there is a great difference between this and a man telling us what he will do on a grand point that spreads over the whole empire. I do not ask him to come and pledge himself, but to tell me what is his principle, and whether he will act it out, and whether he will tell the community that sends him that, on these great topics he agrees with them. If a man cannot do this, he can have no vote from me [cheers]. But let us beware lest we encourage this mode of minute Legislation in this instance. I look upon the Minutes of Council as the most alarming production that we have had in this or any other matter for many generations [cheers]. When Government have touched everything, what has been the result? The people have been enslaved. If, Sir, you were placed at the head of an institution, and you had the training of all the youth connected with it, what would be consistency of your character or conduct, if you did not train them according to your mind? Let the rulers rule, and they will teach the governed simply to obey. I think that no Government is fitted to train the rising generation. The true and proper province of Government is to prevent us from doing injury one to another. They are an excellent preventive service while they keep within their own province, but the moment they come as an executive, to meddle with all the links of society, they will create a perplexity which will at last frighten themselves, or, if they succeed, they will transform their Government into a despotism and their subjects into slaves [loud cheers].

Mr. FLETCHER observed: A gentleman has said that this is not merely a Dissenters' Conference, but one in which the entire community in Great Britain and Ireland is represented. I think we should have a clear understanding as to whether we appear here as Dissenters, or as the opponents of the Government measure. Of course Dissenters oppose it, and some who are not Dissenters also oppose it. If we shape our resolutions according to the position in which we place ourselves, I contend that the resolution now proposed—although I approve of it—is not the first that ought to come before us.

Dr. MASSIE said: In answer to Mr. Fletcher's reasonable inquiries, I beg to say that the Committee did not come with resolutions prepared for the meeting. They were appointed by the meeting, that they might proceed to prepare such business as the meeting required. The gentlemen who have acted as the Central Committee have abstained altogether from any preliminary arrangements, lest it should be said that the London people had dictated to those from the provinces. The resolution now proposed having been the first agreed upon by the Committee it was sent to this meeting for consideration. It has not been determined that this should be a Nonconformist Conference, but that it should assume whatever character the Conference pleased. There are resolutions here that are as universal as Catholicity itself [cheers] in objection to the scheme of Government, which I believe that our excellent friends are prepared to lay before you: if they are incomplete, you can complete them [cheers].

Mr. R. RYLAND said, we are summoned as opponents to the general scheme of education: it may be that we have conforming opponents present, and I hope that we have. I would, therefore, suggest that our first resolution should affirm the generality of our assembly.

Dr. HAMILTON stated that he was sent as one of the deputation from the Committee of the West Riding of Yorkshire, in which Dissenters preponderated, but in which they were not known, for it was a general body.

After a few desultory remarks, Rev. J. H. HINTON brought up a further report from the business Committee, consisting of a series of resolutions. The adoption of the report was moved by Mr. C. STOVEL, seconded by Mr. CHARLES REED, and carried unanimously.

Mr. J. A. JAMES again rose, and re-proposed the resolution given above. We there claim, he said, the honour of being the friends of education; let us, in our future career, under whatever discouraging circumstances we may be placed by the legislature (should this measure pass), show that we are still determined to adhere to the cause of popular education.

Mr. CHARLES STOVEL, in again seconding the resolution, said, my impression is that, if anything is required in order to support the affirmation in the resolution, it is to be found at page 5 of a work entitled, "The School in relation to the State, the Church, and the Congregation," which seems to be a document defending the Government measure. It is stated there, not only that your Sabbath Schools have taken the lead in this measure, but have also afforded the very type to be followed in the movement of the Government measure. I am inclined to think that that concession is decisive evidence not only that you have, as Dissenters, occupied an important place, but that the result of your labours has been felt by the Government [hear, hear]!

Dr. HAMILTON: I shall preface this resolution with very few remarks. I hardly know how to regret the introduction of this scheme. It has brought a great question before the national mind, and it has set the national mind thinking upon it. I think there has been ("forgive me this wrong!") considerable immaturity of the Ministerial mind, and I think the Ministerial mind is now set thinking about it. I believe many have advanced, and I am quite sure that none have receded. Whatever may be the victory or the defeat, we shall close our part in the one or in the other with sustained character and repute. We have lost nothing. Indeed, I am glad to see the perfect coherence of our body—our bodies, to-day [laughter and cheers]. We have got all the B's [laughter], I believe, with us. We all know that the bees are sometimes very active, and at other times very drowsy and honeyless [laughter and cheers]. I believe we have got all the V's with

us to-day, so that we are a compact body [cheers]. We do not know a denomination here—we do not know a sect here—we are a great body, a confederacy, a phalanx. I only wish to guard the meeting—and, perhaps, the younger portion of it—against a very great mistake. They suppose that education must liberate and enlarge the mind. Now, education, like religion, may be made an engine of tyranny to rivet the mind, and not liberate it—to strangle the mind, and not to develop it. The object of this scheme is to give a stereotype, and an organization to the ideas of the public mind. But you say, knowledge is like the ocean's surge. Let that surge be broken, and who can regulate it? So we say, and so it may be. But there are those who can look, even to the ocean surge, with a very restrictive ken. The poor schoolmaster, when he went out of Dover harbour, heard the band on board strike up "Britannia rules the waves;" but he felt a certain malady [laughter], and said "Britannia rules the waves; I wish she would rule them straighter" [loud laughter, and cheers]. We must be very much afraid of looking upon the rollings and surges of the human mind with a schoolmaster's eye, or a schoolmaster's imagination. I beg leave now to move this resolution:—

II. That, waiving, in the first instance, all incidental and collateral objections, this Conference regards the scheme for conferring honours and emoluments on teachers of elementary schools, developed in the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education of August and December last, as both vicious in principle and worthless, if not injurious in practice; vicious in principle, because, overlooking the natural relation of demand and supply, it annexes a bounty to the scholastic profession; and worthless, if not injurious in practice, because, like all bounties, it will overstock the market on the one hand, and produce a deteriorated article on the other.

Mr. J. FLETCHER (Hanley), in seconding the resolution, said, I cordially agree with it, but I think the word "worthless," which occurs twice over, might be left out, and it would read better. Upon the great object of that resolution we are all agreed in this Conference, and perhaps in the country at large. I have taken some pains to ascertain what are the views of those who are the friends of the Government plan, and there are some who think that our scheme of political economy is a very degrading one. I believe there is a strong feeling that this is a view that ought to be discarded—that the only position which the Dissenters can take with strength is, the position of parties who are determined, in no case, to receive any state bounty, and who, taking that position, and taking it on conscientious grounds, cannot be treated impartially, whatever provision may be made by a measure which seeks to embrace the minds of the whole country, and bring them up in the schools of the land. That is one strong point. I think it is right, however, that the politico-economical view should be carefully sifted and brought out before the people. I stood up at a public meeting in our town and found that the people were with me, when I stated that nine tenths of the public taxes came out of the pockets of the working classes—that they were asked to take this measure as a boon though they were paying in the proportion of nine-tenths, and the greater part of the benefit would not reach them, but the salaried pupil-teachers and the monitors, whilst to the poor man not one farthing would accrue. When I stated this, the working classes felt that they had been deceived by the explanations that had been put forth. I believe that if we take the pocket view of the question we shall work on the mind; and I believe that this resolution embraces this sentiment in a clear way; I have, therefore, great pleasure in seconding it.

Mr. HENRY VINCENT rose and said: I will only venture to occupy your time for a few moments in supporting the proposition now before the chair; and presuming that this Conference is really earnest in its desire to oppose the measure against which it is this day entering its protest, I desire to express, as explicitly as possible, the views that I have been able to glean, from that portion of the people with whom I have had the opportunity to come into contact, with reference to the great and odious measure we have this day met to reprobate [cheers]. I agree with the sentiments that have fallen from those who have contended, that the present proposition is subversive of religious liberty, and dangerous to the civil liberty of Englishmen. I agree with the sentiment, that we should endeavour, as far as possible, not to make this meeting a mere exposition of our own Dissenting views—for I hold myself to be a Dissenter, thoroughly entertaining the doctrine, that the Government has nothing to do with spiritual matters [cheers]—that there ought to be no connexion between any religious establishment and the State [cheers]; but we should endeavour, as far as possible, to convince the industrious classes, to convince the middle orders, to convince the friends of freedom in this country, that this assembly is a representation of the true principles of liberty, that we desire to oppose this Government measure, not on any merely sectarian or political grounds, but because we are convinced that the dogma, that a Government has a right to educate the people, is utterly unsound, subversive of our privileges as Christians, and our rights as Dissenters, that in opposing this measure we are not the friends of popular ignorance. We are not those men of whom Dr. Vaughan has spoken, anxious to keep the populace in a state of besotted ignorance, but we are convinced that the measures in progress in this country are better adapted to mould the thriving, the patriotic populace, than any other scheme of education which the Government can give us [laughter and cheers]. And now, while I am anxious to reciprocate the very amiable and Christian sentiments which fell from the lips of Mr. James, of Birmingham, and have no desire to attribute motives to her Majesty's advisers, I cannot but look with grave suspicion upon the proposition which we have met this day to discuss, and more especially when I remember this newborn love of education on the part of our statesmen, with their long and direct hostility to anything like a genuine and independent system of instruction for the working-men of England [cheers]. To a resolution which we have passed, I would only allude for a moment. It is stated, that the Dissenters of England have been among the foremost and most steadfast friends of instruction during the past thirty years. Since the last cannon was fired at Waterloo, who have been the friends of liberty and instruction in England? Without arrogating too much to ourselves, it has been the Dissenters of this country. Independent Churchmen have aided us in their individual capacity; but has the ecclesiastical system been the friend of instruction? Has the Church, in its corporate capacity advocated education? We may remember that while Sir James Graham's Bill was under consideration, one reverend divine went so far as to publish a book of songs for the washerwomen, to which the gentleman behind me (Mr. Burnet) referred. We remember that sentiments were uttered, which proved that, if the clergymen, as a corporate body, were desirous of controlling education, it was only for the purpose of infusing the principle of subserviency into the minds and hearts of the people [hear, hear]. Our ecclesiastical system has not only not been the sincere

friend of education, but it has obstructed the work in almost every village and city in the land. When the British and Foreign School system began to extend its ramifications, when a few schools had been suggested for some of our popular districts, the ecclesiastical and leading members of the aristocracy said, "Do not instruct the working-men, you will make them rebels or meetingers; all this is to strengthen the meetinghouse," and they predicted not only anarchy but Atheism; and what in their view was worse than Atheism—dissent [loud cries of "Hear"]. This went on, and now we come to fresh views of the Government. They did all they could to oppose the instruction of the people, but they were beaten; for we had something more at work than mere schools. The Prussians have their schools, and ours are not so extensive, so large in number, or so well organized in detail; but I affirm that we have a more thriving and intelligent populace [cheers]. We have had another system of education in England, and it is at this that the Government is aiming. The rulers talk of being our instructors, but the fact is, we have been busily at work instructing them [cheers]. At the commencement of the present century, the Nonconformists still felt the effects of some of those sanguinary laws that were passed to punish them in the days of the odious Stuarts; [hear, hear] and it was only by going among "the ignorant and illiterate people," by showing them that the Test and Corporation Acts were unjust, that we had the slightest hope of obtaining their removal, and when we had the hold of the feelings of the "vulgar and illiterate people," then we turned our attention to that place where error finds so certain a home, and where an old dogma retires to, after it has been hunted out of decent society [laughter]. We came to the House of Commons, and there we found the old dogma still in favour of excluding Dissenters from the ordinary privileges and immunities of civilized life; and it was only through popular agitation, which has been the ground-work of England's education, that they were compelled to give way, and to recognize in the Dissenters of this country, a loyal, intelligent, and virtuous body of citizens. The same process has gone on with regard to Catholic emancipation, the Reform Bill, negro emancipation, and the repeal of criminal laws. The people have always instructed the rulers, and I repudiate the notion that persons who stand so much in need of instruction are to set themselves up as the educators of the very people from whom they have derived all their knowledge of religious liberty [cheers]. The worthy Alderman who this day occupies the chair will tell you that Lord Melbourne and the Whigs averred that free-trade was the maddest scheme that was ever heard of, and it was only when a small knot of cotton-spinners [laughter] taught them the principles of political economy, that they could all come in a run, with Master Macaulay in the rear, affirming the principle, that free trade was an enlightened course, and that, after all, the people had more sense than themselves [laughter and cheers]. The question comes, then, on what ground shall we oppose the Government scheme? I say pardon me if my opinion jars with any of yours, for we can bear with differences of opinion here; and it is a grand lesson to learn to bear with each other's differences. Let us forget, as far as we can, our clinging to the notion that Government may be a kind of universal superintendent of our religion. Let us combine to teach the people of England first principles [cheers]. I cannot omit this opportunity of tendering my personal acknowledgments, though they are but humble, to that gentleman who, in one of the most influential of our provincial papers (I mean the *Leeds Mercury*) [loud cheers], has done such good service to the cause of genuine liberty. I met with a Dissenter the other day who said, do not you see that in some of the meetings here our working men are approving of the Government scheme? True, I said; but what have you done as a nonconforming body to so import into their hearts the principles of social justice? Dissenters have been too fashionable [loud cheers]. They have imitated too much the vices of the system against which they have protested. They have thought that boldness in defence of their principles could not co-exist with kind personal demeanour towards those from whom they differed [hear, hear]. They have been afflicted with what they call politics, because they saw politics mixed up with bribes, and turbulence, and mobs, and anarchy. But these ought not to turn Dissenters from a consideration of the principles, the right understanding of which is necessary to the defence of their religious principles, and to hand down to posterity those principles for which their forefathers contended and bled [cheers]. Now, it has been our erring to the power of our opponents, and our turning our backs on the people, amongst whom we ought to have been entreaching ourselves, and around whom we should have been flinging, as a mantle of protection, our influence, whom we should have trained up in a knowledge of their duty to God, and in all the great virtues of the gospel, and those sublime principles of freedom which naturally grow out of an enlightened comprehension of the moral precepts of Christianity, that the evil has arisen [cheers]. I am anxious we should not be alarmed because certain men of the working classes are in favour of the Government scheme of education. They are in favour of it because they have not been trained into the knowledge of the principles on which Government should stand, the policy by which they ought to be regulated. I say that, as representing a powerful part of the people of England, we shall do well this day, and on future days of the conference, to scatter such principles abroad as shall convince the masses that you are striving to defend not only your denominational privileges, but the great principles of justice which have always made England renowned, which have been her bulwark; and without religion she must perish from the earth [cheers]. I will merely express how entirely I feel that view of the question which has brought you together, and, as far as my humble influence extends with those with whom I constantly act, I have sought to impress upon them, that the Dissenters, in opposing this measure, are not adverse to their interests. If any of them have held erroneous opinions, believing that statesmen are perfection and crowds are pious—if men have held this startling dogma and believe that Government may interfere, you may come to this conclusion, that as long as there exists in England an Established Church within which the aristocracy possesses such an amount of power—an Established Church which has a ways striven to maintain its own authority at the expense of the liberty and happiness of the people, and has only given way when public opinion has beaten them—so long as this system exists it is impossible to be quite rid of the theory that Government may be the educator of the people. But there should be a clear understanding that this does not fall within the province of the Government, and that the Church must be separated from the State [loud and long-continued cheering]; and that will convince the people, by your bold but prudent and discreet expression of opinion, that there should be a firm and determined unity amongst all those who can confide in their honesty and believe in their intentions. Henceforth it should be a recognised principle on which the dissenting community should take their stand, that things secular and religious must be kept separate in all matters of legislation; that the Government has nothing to do with the religious opinions of the people; that thus, through training the nation, working men may gradually rise in the glorious comprehension of principles, and in a firm determination to manifest those principles in every position, so that in those agitations which constantly engage attention some attempt may be made, not merely to collect the scattered opinions of the multitude, but to invest that multitude with that franchise which by right belongs to them [loud cheers].

Mr. J. A. JAMES said: It is possible that we may injure our cause by overstating it. I aver that, whatever my opinion may be of the opposition in past times of a great portion of the clergy to the education of the people—whatever my opinion may be of the motives by which some of the clergy may be influenced in supporting this measure at the present moment—I do not in my conscience believe that this is the case with all, and that there are not to be found among the clergy real friends to the education of the people. I am in the habit of intercourse with many whom I know to be as warmly attached to the education of the people as I am myself [hear, hear]. I feel that I should be doing injustice to my own feelings as well as to justice to them if I did not make this declaration [hear, hear].

Mr. VINCENT rose to explain. He had no desire to say that no

clergymen were in favour of education. He spoke of them in their corporate capacity.

Mr. JAMES said that he accepted the explanation.

Mr. R. AINSLIE said that Dr. Kay Shuttleworth had gone further than any one had done that day. He wished to read one extract from his pamphlet:—"A considerable portion of the clergy and laity of this country confidently held the conviction that the inevitable tendency of an elevated secular instruction was to unsettle the minds of the working classes—to unfit them for a life of manual labour—to render them discontented with their station; and, if such instruction were general, it was feared that it would prepare a universal insurrection of the poor against the rich. Such as did not hold these doctrines with distinctness did not believe that the state of the labouring poor could be materially improved by education, and were of opinion that the best condition that could be expected was that of quiet homage, which, though characterized by no energies, and accompanied with few virtues beyond patience and submission, was yet consistent with their highest conceptions of the condition of a race which appeared to exist only to labour and to die" [loud cries of "Hear, hear"].

Dr. MASSIE hoped that Mr. Ainslie would not occupy the conference with quotations from Dr. Kay Shuttleworth—they had other business to do.

Mr. R. AINSLIE said that if he could quote Dr. Kay Shuttleworth on a point mooted that morning, he submitted that he was doing more good than by occupying the meeting in a desultory manner [cheers].

Mr. C. STROVEL said: There are two points on which my mind rests in reference to this resolution. The first is the unprincipled character of the Government scheme, or rather that feature which renders it wrong in principle; and, secondly, that point which defines it as injurious in practice. First, as to the question whether it be right or wrong to confine to any Government in any way the education of the people over whom it presides, I shall pronounce no opinion now, trusting that as your resistance advances that question will be fully considered, and your opinions fully and most decidedly pronounced thereupon [hear, hear, hear]. My impression is that the great strength of your cause hangs entirely upon your own position. Measures may be altered though they be wrong at first glance, but the great point arrived at is the one which I consent at present to lay aside. But even supposing it were right, it becomes a matter of great moment for you to consider whether you will silently stand by at a time when, instead of the House of Parliament being employed in the construction of the law, and the Queen in Council employed simply in the execution of that law, you will allow the introduction of a measure which shall change the council of the Queen to an executive body, and allow that council to proceed in the execution of matters on which no statute law has been passed [hear, hear]. This gives to my mind immense importance as to the principle on which the measure, if I may so call it, rests. If it be allowed that the Privy Council, which, as its name imports, is now a body chosen to counsel the Queen, shall be engaged in carrying out the execution of existent laws, and if that shall be split up into several committees, one taking into its execution matters relating to the health of towns, another, the management of persons entering into the organizations of trade; and another, all things that influence the education of the people—if you should quietly stand by, the result will be this, that the Privy Council, thus split into these several committees, would be entrusted with conducting all your national affairs, and they would be conducted with such secrecy and determination that ultimately they would be almost the only power to carry out any measure which would be produced for universal adoption. The importance of this point has been determined both in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords; first on the motion of Lord Stanley, when he proposed that an address should be delivered to the Queen, imploring her to dissolve that Committee of Council. His motion was lost only by a majority of 2. Under the motion of the Archbishop of Canterbury, it was proposed, on the same ground, that a similar address should be presented, and he carried his resolution by a majority of 111. Both Houses have declared that this is unconstitutional, but the opponents of the measure have been purchased, and the archbishop is now the friend of the measure that he denounced. That the objection to the measure is not merely technical is, in my estimation, fully determined by all history. First, if it be asked where the measure comes from, I would turn at once to its source. It is something filched out of what I call the cess-pool of French legislation, of which unquestionably it has been the object, from the period of 1806, when Napoleon first invented the Imperial University, which was established by the decrees of 1808 and 1811, continued under the restored Bourbons, and again introduced under Louis Philippe,—it has, I say, throughout been the object to put all kinds of national interests into the hands of committees and boards, the first result of which has been to give the Government a majority upon which it can depend, and the second to produce in the government itself that kind of suspicion which would not allow Louis Philippe to rest in Paris without a new fortification and sixteen forts, five of which will sweep every avenue to the court and palace of the king [hear, hear]. Is this a thing which England did long for? [cheers.] But again, to shew that this is not a merely technical question, let me ask, what was the result of forming the Committee of the Privy Council, ultimately called the Star Chamber, in this country? It was this, that although that Star Chamber was formed by an Act of Parliament and regulated by statute law, yet the rights of Englishmen were so much infringed, and British feeling was so much insulted by that Star Chamber, that at length England moved from her centre to her circumference, heaved from her breast the terrible incumbrance which had thus been created, and dashed the throne itself to atoms [loud applause]. I take another instance to show the importance of this principle as one feature of the measure which occurred previous to the thirty year's war—or rather, it introduced the thirty year's war, in Germany. The Emperor of Germany wished to make the Privy Council the instrument of discharging certain great offices of Government, and of regulating and administering certain great points of justice. In carrying out this object he superseded the great Convention of the States holden at Spire, and inflicted on the empire an injury which resulted in war. When the conflict commenced, the population of Germany was 16,000,000. What was the result? The conflict

terminated with 4,000,000 [hear, hear]. A nation which ought to have doubled within the period was reduced to a fourth, and at the close of the war the population was scarcely double that of our own metropolis [hear, hear]. Now as to the working of this measure, I cannot conceive that it can produce in the hands of the British Privy Council any effects better than those which have followed from the operation of the most unobstructed measures in France. Supposing the measure to proceed, what is the benefit which it offers to the British people? It comes, indeed, professing to cheapen education. It is not contended that the voluntary contributions of the people shall be diminished—these are to be levied still as the price of the Government grants [hear, hear]. It is not intended that the parent shall pay less for the education of his children; it is unquestionably included in the plan that the child, or its parent, or its friends, shall pay as much as has been paid heretofore. The measure will extend through infinite ramifications. The bribe, which will be given to the children, will be the means of procuring the influence of all the families in which those children live after they have passed the age of twelve or fourteen years, when they shall become stipendiaries of the Government. What hope will there then be for the middle classes? What will then be the hope of forming a good House of Commons, or of extending—I will not say universal—suffrage? What will be the hope, then, of securing an harmonious working of the body of which you form a part? [hear, hear.] When this experiment, sinking in, as it has done, like a thief avoiding the light [cheers]—when this experiment has once been introduced, it will put a century back all the great objects for which England did league, and for which the British public did employ their most earnest efforts. And yet I will not hazard a prediction as to the future; for I cannot but remember that it is the first shot which kindles the courage of opponents [cheers]. I will not say there are no Churchmen who are friendly to education, but this I will say, that multitudes who are now prepared to concede what education has done, would snatch its influence as an instrument of Church polity [cheers]. This, I will say—the measure has unmasked our foes. We see now with what we have to deal; and if it be the case that this measure shall make Englishmen more aware of their position, and appreciate more highly their great principles, perhaps this may be but the onset of another movement, splendid in its character, and, though less peaceful in its progress, yet tremendous in its results [applause]. My heart longs for the moment when I shall see Dissenters raised to that precise point in which, with unstained hands, they shall stand before the Government, free from all entanglement through deviating from their principles [loud cheers]. I would not occupy your attention further, but for a suggestion arising from my last remark. Some of you, probably, will remember the stiff discussion which took place in the Borough-road Conference, respecting the reception of endowments; and others will remember what effects have been produced in our religious bodies by the reception of what is called the *Regium Donum* [hear, hear]. Others, again, will have remarked the protests of their brethren, when they have been led to receive Government grants for the construction of their schools. At the time it was said that this was an innocuous proceeding—a thing unworthy of suspicion; and, consequently, the money was taken. What has been the result? Why, it has been pleaded in the House of Commons, and in the House of Lords, and it will be pleaded unquestionably, that those men who forfeit their principles when their own interests are to be served, are not worthy of respect when they object to the introduction of particular measures [hear, hear, and cheers]. I wish it may be the case, my fellow countrymen, my fellow Christians, that this Conference may do something more effectual than was done by the Conference holden in reference to the Maynooth grant. The Maynooth measure was carried in spite of all our protestations; it may be that this measure will be carried in spite of all our protestations. By such measures the Government are, in one sense, educating the people; they are teaching us what they are, and what we must be [hear]; and I trust that the forthcoming triennial meeting of the Anti-state-church Association will lead our brethren to come forth and present their principles intact, not being implicated in any compromise or dastardly act whatever. If, like the troop of Gideon, all must be carried down to the water and soiled by the lapping, let it be done [laughter]; and, when it is done, I trust it will be found that there is much heart and principle left in the British public, and that the people will rise up and say, "Instead of having a national education to support a national church, we object to the education, and shake off the Church itself" [immense applause]. Once more, brethren, and I have done. Let it be observed, that that Government measure must be bad which involves tenfold more expense than is needful to carry out the object proposed. Let us, then, look at the state of the matter. England has had, somewhere or other—whether they were Dissenters or Churchmen I care not now—but somewhere she has had a spirited few, who, within the last fifty years, have carried education to a point which has made it dreadful to the power that now wishes to engross its influence. If the members of the Government now say that education is a little imperfect, and really wish to see it improved, there is an easy way of doing this—without violating the principles of the constitution—without proposing any sliding-scale measures, tending to alter the character of the people. Let them set England free; let them relieve us from the terrific curse of some of our colonial regulations; let them use their high prerogative in releasing us from the stain and the pollution which incessantly rolls to us from that cesspool Oxford; let them lighten the tithes; let them settle the question of church-rates; let them, in short, set the British people free, and never will they ask the Government to educate them [immense and continued applause].

The resolution was then put from the chair, and carried unanimously.

Mr. JOSEPH STURGE then rose, and said:—The resolution which I am requested to move is as follows:—

That the scheme being thus vicious and injurious as an educa-

tional measure, in the opinion of this Conference, there is nothing to break the force of those strong collateral objections to which it is liable, first, as having been brought forward not in the constitutional form of a Bill, to be discussed in both Houses of Parliament, but as Minutes of the Committee of the Executive; secondly, as involving in the issue a large and unprofitable expenditure of the public money; and thirdly, as creating an influence on the part of the Government, over the popular masses, which may, at any time, be employed for objects politically corrupt, and can scarcely exist for any considerable period, without exercising an influence unfavourable to the national character.

If I were much more competent to address such an assembly as this, I should not, after the address which you have heard, and at this late hour, trespass long upon your attention. There is one point which I think has not been sufficiently dwelt upon in the meetings which have been held in reference to this subject, and that is, the unconstitutional character of the measure. As an illustration of the fearful consequences of introducing a measure which cannot be discussed as regards its principles, I would allude to the manner in which the expenses of the army and navy are provided for in the House of Commons [hear, hear]. There, you know, the form is kept up of passing the Mutiny Act, and we find that through the course pursued, the expenses allowed have now risen to more than £20,000,000 per annum almost, without any discussion; and, therefore, instead of £2,000,000, the expense connected with this measure may amount to £20,000,000 if it be allowed to proceed. With regard to the measure itself, I am quite sure that if it would secure a good education on sound Christian principles, so far from objecting to £2,000,000, I would not shrink from consenting to an expenditure of ten times that amount. But it is very clear, from all experience, that the last party in the world who should educate the people is the State-church [hear, hear, and laughter]. If it be right in principle that the Government should educate the people at all, it must be right also that it should, like parents, compel the children to go to school [hear, hear]. Now, my friends, perhaps you are hardly aware of what is going forward at the present time in the British colonies. I hold in my hand the *Royal Gazette*, of British Guiana, which contains a statement as to the educational system there, which is signed by Dr. Shuttleworth, and also another document which, among other things, contains the following. Addressing the Colonial Assembly, the writer says:—"Nor should I be adverse to any well-considered law which should constrain the parents of children not exceeding a specified age to send such children to school [hear, hear] under a penalty for neglecting to do so, except for cause shown, and to pay a specified sum for schooling." By whom do you think this is signed? Why, by Lord Grey [hear, hear]. It is dated "Downing-street, Feb. 26, 1847." But this is perfectly consistent. If it be right that education should be taken out of the hands of parents, it is certainly right that the Government should compel the children to go to school somewhere [hear, hear]. The last paragraph of the resolution refers to the effect which would be produced on the public mind. I think it is almost impossible for a scheme to have been devised which would be so likely to enslave the public mind. I am one of those who are thought to have carried their opinions rather too far [cries of "No, no"]. I do trust that the circumstances in which we are now placed will induce some of my friends, who have, perhaps, condemned me a little [laughter], to re-consider their opinions. I think there are persons, even amongst Dissenters, upon whom this measure comes as something like a just punishment [hear, hear]. I am perfectly satisfied that there can be no security for religious liberty, except upon the basis of true political freedom [hear, hear]. At the risk of being considered a little out of order, I feel compelled to enunciate that principle on the present occasion, and to say that, if you, the Dissenters of England, are to be saved from religious bondage, it will be by having with you the sympathies of the people [hear, hear]. I trust that, from this day, you will show that they have your sympathies, and then, I am sure, you will have theirs. With these remarks, I feel great pleasure in moving the resolution [cheers].

Mr. E. BAINES, jun., on rising to address the assembly, was received with reiterated cheers. He said: Mr. Chairman and gentleman, after expressing the deep obligation which I feel for the very kind manner in which you have been pleased to receive my name, I shall not make so bad a return as to inflict on you a long speech, especially as there is really some truth in the taunt to which I have been subjected by the *Times* and other journals, that I have inflicted a rather large portion of myself on the public in connexion with this subject [laughter]. I have, however, done so because I honestly believe, after deep deliberation on the subject, that there never was a measure which so seriously threatened the civil liberties of this country, which so trenchanted upon that which belonged to the people themselves, or which contained in itself a principle so destructive to religious liberty; tending, as it does, to the universal endowment, on the part of the State, and to the universal control, therefore, by the State, of all religion, and, therefore, to the destruction of the character and liberties of the people [cheers]. I echo to the full the sentiment expressed by the gentleman who moved this resolution, that if it be the part of the Government to take out of the hands of parents the great duty of educating their children, there is no point at which you can reasonably stop short of this—that it is the right of the Government to make the education of the people compulsory [hear, hear]. I shall not, however, dwell at present on that point, as it may arise at some other time; and as I must not attempt to traverse the wide range of this vast subject, I will endeavour to confine my observations to the resolution which I have undertaken to second. The first point stated in the resolution as an objection to the measure is the unconstitutional form in which it has been brought forward. Now, after this speech—so full upon this point—of the Rev. Mr. Stovel, I feel it quite unnecessary to dwell on the unconstitutional character of the measure, further than to remark that that part of our constitution which is here violated—viz., that which renders it necessary that every change in the laws and institutions of the country should be introduced in the form of a bill to pass through both Houses of Parliament—is not merely one of the most important safe-

guards of wise legislation, but is, especially, one of the greatest safeguards of the liberties of the British people [hear, hear]. It is a principle of the constitution, established as far back as the reign of Edward I., as far back as the time when we first had a House of Commons, that any new law should be brought in in such a form as to undergo full discussion in both Houses of Parliament. Now this measure is, I say, a violation of that principle, without which it would be in the power of any Executive Government to bring forward, late in the season, a measure concocted by a committee of its own members, to take Parliament by surprise, and to pass that measure, as it is proposed to pass this, by a single vote of one branch of the Legislature [hear, hear]. Now, I do not know how it is possible more outrageously to violate the constitution than by such a measure as this. So important are these safeguards, that, if this were the best measure that could be devised, instead of being, as I consider it, the worst, if it were most unexceptionable in its principles and provisions, it ought to be resisted by the universal people of England, if only on the ground which I have stated. I pass now to the second point in the resolution, which is the large and unprofitable expenditure of the public money. That the expenditure will be large, I cannot entertain the shadow of a doubt; because, after I had made an estimate that the expenses involved in this measure must amount at least to £1,740,000, Mr. Kay Shuttleworth, quoting that estimate in detail, did not venture to impugn one single item [hear, hear]. He might have attacked my statement as to the number of schools, and said that I was altogether wrong on the point; he might have said that I was wrong arithmetically, and that my calculations were not correct; but he does not venture to do either one or the other; and the inference is irresistible, that he could not prove me to be in error. But, taking the aggregate sum as £1,740,000, he attempts to create an impression that a large amount is to be raised by voluntary contributions, and from the school pence of the children. Now the first remark which I shall make upon that point is, that by far the larger amount of the money which he says would be received in the shape of voluntary contributions, or of the school pence of the children, is, at this time, actually raised by the public, and the children in the existing schools. I never said that 15,000 new schools would be created; what I have said is, that the present schools amount to very nearly that number. I have stated to Lord Lansdowne personally, that the number of schools upheld, maintained, and paid for, in one way or other, by the National Society alone, is nearly 10,000. The estimate of 15,000 schools is far below the mark if you take the proportion of schools to the population either in Prussia or in France: I believe that my estimate for England and Wales is really too low. Then I have said that the greater part of that by the mention of which Mr. Kay Shuttleworth attempts to frighten us, is raised already; while much of the remainder of what he says will be required would never be required at all. To make up the sum of £1,800,000, which he says would be required, there is an item of £400,000 put down for kitchens and washhouses. I had made an estimate that they would cost the public £26,000 altogether; while Mr. Kay Shuttleworth, in order to show how much would be required from voluntary contributions, makes out the enormous and preposterous sum of £400,000. He says that the kitchens and washhouses would each involve an expenditure of £200 a year. My answer is, that this is a perfect delusion, and should never have been put forward in the Minutes, for no such kitchens and washhouses would be established [hear, hear]. My reply is, in short, that the greater part of the sum mentioned is actually paid at this moment, in the form of voluntary contributions and children's pence, and that as regards nearly the whole of the remainder, it would never be required at all [hear, hear]. The estimate which I have put down, therefore, stands, I think, altogether unimpeached. The resolution says that the proposed expenditure, would be unprofitable. I quite agree with Mr. Sturge, that if the money were expended in the right way, not by the Government, but by the people themselves [hear, hear], the expenditure of this sum, or of any other sum that might be required, could not be objected to. But I believe that this would be an unprofitable expenditure, and I do so on several grounds. In the first place, I believe it would tend to remove the support of schools from the voluntary principle to the compulsory principle [hear, hear]. What is this measure but a proclamation by the Government to the people, of which this is the effect:—"It is our duty to do all that you do not do, and all that you leave undone we will immediately step in and do?" [hear, hear]. Now, when any proclamation of that sort is made, is it not absolutely certain that one effect will be to induce the people to say, "Well, if the Government will do this, we will not?" Most assuredly it will. To the extent that the Government steps in to do the work, will all voluntary aid be withdrawn, and you will find, in the end, that not more money has been applied than was applied before; with the exception, indeed, that much money will be expended wastefully; for it is the common course of things that money expended by the Government in such matters is expended wastefully, whereas money supplied by voluntary benevolence is generally administered economically [hear, hear]. Now, another ground upon which I think this would be an unprofitable expenditure of the public money, is, that there would be a complete change in our educational system, and that education would be placed entirely in the hands of the Government. Now, the question is, whether the work of education is likely to be better conducted by the Government than by the people. If it be; then, so far, that is in favour of the expenditure; but if you believe, after an enlarged consideration of the subject, and after looking at the result of all past interferences in matters of this kind, that, instead of stimulating education, instead of improving it, the measure would rather tend to paralyse education, to check improvement, and to retard the introduction of a new and better system, then you will be of opinion that this is an unprofitable expenditure of public money. Now, that is, with me, the strongest possible conviction. I perfectly agree with the reverend gentleman who spoke a short time ago, on that

subject that the Government is not likely to improve the character of the education given, but on the contrary, very seriously to deteriorate it. I don't mean that it would not, in the first instance, call in the aid of a great number of very able men, and that some improvement would not result from such a step; but the tendency afterwards would be to stereotype the system of education, to make it unwieldy, and to render it incapable of adapting itself to the existing state of things. I also agree with the gentleman who said that one effect of the measure would be to transfer all the burdens of schools from the shoulders of the rich to those of the poor. Just so far as you transfer schools from the voluntary to the compulsory system, do you transfer them from spontaneous benevolence, and leave them dependant on public taxes. I put it to any man who knows anything at all of the operation and pressure of taxation, whether it be not the labour of the country which pays the greatest amount of taxes; and, therefore, just so far as you transfer the support of schools from the voluntary principle to Government funds, just so far do you transfer the burden from the rich to the poor. The third ground of objection stated in my resolution refers to the extension of the influence of the Government. Now, there can be no question that that influence would be extended to a very alarming degree. I have seen no attempt to impugn the calculation, that on the whole there would be 8,000 persons brought into the receipt of Government money by this measure; and I think that after the calculation has been so long before the public without being impugned, it may be assumed as correct [hear, hear]. The whole number of situations which the Government patronage places at their disposal, in England and Wales, does not at present exceed 15,000; yet here, by one measure you have 88,000 new appointments given to the Government. It is not too much to say that all persons in the receipt of public money are influenced in some degree by that circumstance; and whether the amount be £5, £10, or £20, it is necessary to the man who receives it; while for the retention of his situation he will be altogether dependent on a Government officer [hear, hear]. Now if you can be so simple as to believe that we may give to the Government a control over the pecuniary interests, and the means of livelihood of 88,000 people in this country without at the same time doing serious damage to the liberties of the country, then I almost despair of the common sense of the people of England [hear, hear]. Just in proportion as the measure extends the influence of the Government, will it degrade the character of the people. This is its most serious aspect. It brings an immense number of the people into the character of receivers of Government pensions, and it brings a still larger number into the situation of expectants of Government pensions; and I do not believe it is possible that that can be done without degrading the character of the British public. Mr. Kay Shuttleworth, in his pamphlet, holds out these payments in the grossest manner, as a bribe to the working classes, not to a few persons, but to the working classes generally. He points out to the parents of poor families that they will have the greatest interest in supporting the schools, because they will find in them the means of obtaining for their children, early in life, situations in the public service with double or treble the wages of a working man. That that must have a tendency to corrupt the working classes generally, there can be no possible doubt. Can any man who ever conducted a canvass for a popular election entertain the shadow of a doubt as to what the effect would be upon the canvass if you found in every sixth or tenth house which you entered a Government pensioner? [hear, hear]. A very large proportion of the working classes would be brought into the condition of hangers-on of the Government; and a great effect must be produced upon those who, like Mr. Vincent and others, have taken a lively interest in the extension of the suffrage. This statement of the measure has thus operated with some of the working-classes who are not well acquainted with its provisions; and they have supposed that it would be a very excellent thing for them to obtain the advantages offered. But I have told my fellow-countrymen what I tell you, and I hope you will come to the same conclusion as the 15,000 persons in Leeds—that this measure is a most splendid bribe, but that it would destroy the independence of the public character; that, whilst, on the one hand, it so mightily extends the influence of the Government, on the other, it would suck up the very pith and marrow of the independence of the whole people [cheers]. Now, that is the greatest evil which can possibly be inflicted on any people; it is a most serious moral evil; and, on this ground, therefore, without trespassing further upon your attention, on this ground alone, I say, I think you would be justified in raising your voices against the measure, and using all the influence which you possess in your several localities to prevent it being carried into effect [loud cheers].

Mr. MIDDLEDITCH (minister) said: In the discussion which took place at Liverpool, we heard a great deal in reference to chapter and verse, and, perhaps, we may naturally be asked for chapter and verse in our discussion to-day. Reference has already been made to the times of Edward I., and I think it will be well that we should be able to put our finger on something in the established constitution of the country which supports our views. Here is the principle which this measure violates, as stated in the Bill of Rights:—

Whereas the late King James II., by the assistance of divers evil councillors, judges, and ministers, employed by him, did endeavour to subvert and extirpate the Protestant religion, and the laws and liberties of the kingdom—

1. By assuming and exercising a power of dispensing with, and suspending of laws, and the execution of laws, without consent of Parliament;

3. By issuing and causing to be executed a commission under the great seal for erecting a court called the Court of Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Causes.

It was then for vindicating and asserting ancient rights and liberties, and—

1. That the pretended power of suspending of laws, or for the execution of laws, by regal authority, without consent of Parliament, is illegal;

2. That the pretended power of dispensing with laws, or the execution of laws, by regal authority, as it hath been assumed and exercised of late, is illegal;

3. That the commission for erecting the late Court of Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Causes, and all other commissions and courts of like nature, are illegal and pernicious.

The last provision, declaring, that "no placeman shall have a seat in the Commons' House of Parliament," was expunged from the Act of Settlement. I would ask, Mr. Chairman, if the other provisions are to be expunged from the Bill of Rights? [hear, hear.]

The resolution was then put from the chair and carried unanimously.

Dr. VAUGHAN said: I rise to move the following resolution:—

That, most especially, this Conference objects to the Government measure as, in a new form, allying the state with religious institutions, and thus aggravating an evil already of enormous magnitude by the creation of a subsidiary ecclesiastical establishment.

I scarcely need say, Sir, that my position in relation to this controversy has been one of considerable delicacy, and at times one of considerable pain [hear, hear]. I have felt it my duty to take a course with regard to which I perceived clearly that a very large number of my brethren did not see as I saw. But, Sir, having been a Churchman, I became a Dissenter that I might have my ecclesiastical liberty, and whatever my ecclesiastical connexion, to the end of the chapter I will be a free man [hear]. Then, Sir, since things have taken the course which they recently have done, the thing within me which is called conscience has told me to alter my position, and I have now placed myself in a position hazarding friendships in another connexion. But, Sir, I know of no friendship upon this earth that a man should covet when put in competition with the friendship of his own conscience, and I stand here to-day, Sir, as I am happy to feel, in good relation to that inward monitor [hear, hear]. I fully approve, Sir, of the resolution which I have just now read. It has been said that men never become so rightly taunted as when they are found to desert their principles in connexion with some clear indication that gain has prompted this desertion [hear, hear, and cheers]. This test is now applied in its full bearing to English dissent, and so far, most assuredly, as any distinctive principle of that dissent is concerned, I shall yield to no man under this roof in my willingness to submit to any sacrifice, or to brave any storm, that the pearl of great price, nonconformist consistency, may remain unsullied. We might, indeed, as we are told, avail ourselves to the full of all the proposed advantages of the scheme which is now presented to us, but we see clearly enough that we could not do that but upon grounds which would make us utterly inconsistent in retaining the name of seceders from the principle of establishments [hear, hear]. It is now no matter for debate, whether the system set forth under the name of an educational system, be or be not religious; it is now no matter for debate whether the principle of the connexion between civil and ecclesiastical power be or be not infringed by it. I can have no good opinion of that man's judgment who can be in any hesitancy on that point; and if that point be clear, then the furthering of English nonconformity is clear so far as the point in question extends. Sir, I go so far with all about me. If they go on further—I will not say if they "rush in where angels fear to tread"—but if they go somewhere, whither an angel cannot follow them—all I can say is, that they should have compassion upon my weakness. Whenever the time comes which would lead me quite to the point to which my valued friend, Mr. Baines, has gone, in that hour I will proclaim upon my housetop that that is my place. But, Sir, we are here, I apprehend to ascertain the ground upon which we can be one in relation to our opposition to this measure, Mr. Baines has just indicated his fear, from something which he had seen from my pen to-day, in a leading journal connected with this metropolis, that I meant to say, in what was there brought forward, that if the ground of religious objection to this measure could be entirely removed, all the rest would be straight. I do not mean to be committed to that, but I do mean to put myself in the position of saying, "You do, in the manner in which I have pointed out, inflict violence upon my conscience by this proposal—at least, you put me in a position in which I cannot possibly be on a level with those around me, except at the cost of doing that which my conscience, as a religious man, will not allow me to do." Now, Sir, I cannot but hope that when the men who have to deliberate upon this measure in the People's House, are made to see, as I trust they will be, in various ways, that there is this flagrant wrong inflicted by these Minutes, whatever we may say about their religious preferences, I cannot but hope that their English love of fair play will come to their aid and prompt them to interpose, to prevent the majority from tyrannizing over a minority. This, I am willing to hope, Sir; but, at all events, I think we should be concerned to place ourselves in a just position, and to endeavour to show that there is gross calumny in the charge which construes our opposition to this measure into indifference, and, indeed, hostility, to the instruction and elevation of the people [hear, hear, hear]. Assuredly, it is not a little to the dishonour of our public press that we could have been misrepresented in this manner [hear, hear]. We may err—we may not be infallible in thought or feeling—but that the Protestant Dissenters of England should be accounted indifferent to the popular interest, careless about the elevation of the people, as compared with their fellow citizens—this is a thing so flagrantly wrong, that, if it pass current amid the excited passions of the hour, history will record it upon her tablet, amongst the many records there deposited, as one of the wrongs which English Nonconformity has had to bear in her struggle to do right and to act upon principles which she held to be sound [cheers]. Let us wait and see if all the religious difficulties are removed, and it will then be time enough to consider whether, apart from such difficulties, the measure is brought before us under such a complexion as will secure for it our support. It has been said by an esteemed friend that very possibly this measure has come upon some of us as a sort of punishment for our sins. Well, Sir, I would rather be punished a little for being somewhat too confiding, than for being somewhat too suspicious; and if brethren have been disposed to hope too much from sources whence there has been much received in former times to warrant a hope, I think old services ought not to be forgotten. With regard to what is now doing, I have no scruple at all in giving expression to my deep feeling of

sorrow in relation to it. I have no scruple in doing more than that—in saying that if this course of things is to be prosecuted, the old relation is broken up [loud cheers]. Whatever may come out of the change it must tell; but what it becomes us to cleave to as our security, come fair come foul, are the principles which our fathers have bequeathed to us—those which our consciences have approved—those which made them what they were in the interval between 1640 and 1660, the manhood period in English history [immense applause]—the time when men had hearts—the time when men's hearts blended—the time when "the little one became as a thousand, and the small one as a strong nation" [renewed applause]. It is in the nature of the outward storm to constrain the beaten traveller to wrap his cloak around him, and to say, "Is it so? then I must meet you, rough one, as I best can." So must it be now. If the storm beat, and we are misunderstood and misrepresented, 'tis but the strife of tongues—little, compared with that clash of steel, that burst of fire-arms, that tremendous shock of Naseby, and of Marston-Moor, with which our fathers were familiar [great applause].

Mr. G. W. ALEXANDER, on rising to second the resolution, said,—Mr. Chairman and Friends, I can only say that, though I am unequal to the doing of anything which can contribute much to your cause, I yet feel a lively interest in the object. I can honestly say that, in the Christian education of the people of England I have long felt a warm interest. For some years I have been a member of the British and Foreign School Society. I did not immediately make up my mind that it was right to oppose the Government scheme of education; but, after deliberate reflection, and after reading a considerable portion of the documents which have been published, I have arrived at the conviction that that measure is, in a very high degree, objectionable, and that it does involve a serious infringement of religious liberty. Amongst the documents which have been put forth by the Committee of the Privy Council, I wish to call attention to one of two volumes, containing the reports of the Government inspectors of schools. I think we have in these volumes very clear evidence as to what will be the character of the schools proposed to be established under Government superintendence. In the report of a gentleman named Allen, I find this statement:—

The difficulty of maintenance appears to press heaviest on parishes where the great tithes are owned by non-resident incumbents (a class that is gradually lessening), or by non-resident appropriators. The parish of Meopham, in Kent, illustrates this. The population is near 1,000; the rental, judging from the tithe commutation, can scarcely be less than £4,000 per annum. On forwarding the usual paper of questions (issued by your lordships, and sanctioned by the archbishop), the vicar, in answer to inquiries as to the annual expenditure for school materials, fuel, &c., stated that there were no funds for such purposes, although at the time several pounds were needed to prevent the dilapidation of the premises. This statement was accompanied with a formal notice, drawn up for your lordships' information, of the nominal amount of the property of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury in the parish, as owners of the great tithes (now settled at £800 per annum), all the manorial rights and quit-rents, and a farm of 700 acres. This beneficial interest, however, in the parish, amounts only to between £350 and £400 per annum, their property being let on lease; and as they subscribed £100 per annum to the Diocesan Board of Education, they have generally considered this as exempting them from other annual payments to schools. The vicar has more than once applied to the chapter for aid; but as yet, during his incumbency, a period of 30 years, the only contribution from that body towards educating the poor of the parish, is stated to be a grant (with consent of the lessee) of a quarter of an acre of land as a school site, together with the fees of conveyance, amounting to nineteen guineas. But as, with one exception, the inhabitants of Meopham do not appear to bear their share of the burden of the school, the dean and chapter may feel that no very good case can be made out for the parish to claim help from non-residents. The contribution of the lessee of the church property, whose interest in the parish is far larger than that of the dean and chapter, is stated at two guineas per annum.

I find it here stated that the great difficulty which exists as regards the support of Church schools is, the circumstance that a very large amount of tithes are owned by persons who are non-resident in the parish. As a Protestant Dissenter I do feel it a very great hardship to be called upon to pay taxes, through the want of consideration on the part of certain owners of tithes. I feel it, moreover, a great hardship to be compelled to pay towards the support of principles which I conscientiously disapprove, and towards which the Dissenters, in common with the Churchmen of England, are already obliged to pay somewhere about £7,000,000 per annum; especially as the Church contains nearly the whole of the nobility, and most of the opulent persons in this country. The schools of the Church are, too, supported in many ways that those of the Dissenters cannot be. I find, in the report of the National Society for 1845, that in the preceding year, no less than £250,000 was raised for Church of England schools.

Mr. BAINES: Excuse the interruption; but that statement is capable of some misapprehension. The sum mentioned is not the amount raised yearly. It was the produce of a Queen's Letter, and of a large special subscription for schools in the manufacturing districts. The annual subscriptions amount to about £8,000.

Mr. ALEXANDER: I am aware, that in the case referred to, a very large sum was raised specially for education in the manufacturing and mining districts of the country; still, I think we have here a proof that the National Society can, if it please, raise money for schools conducted on Church principles. If we must have a plan for the education of the people, I think the principle should be, that every person should contribute a certain sum for that object, and that he should give his money to whatever society he thinks fit. This principle is carried out in the United States of America. A clergyman, in a letter in relation to a school under his superintendence, says, he thinks that if such a school had existed thirty years ago, there would not now be a single Dissenter in the parish [laughter]. It is admitted, even by the *Times*, and by a document put forth by the Committee of the Privy Council,

that it is a matter of real hardship, that in any place where there is only one school, and that a National school, the child of the Dissenter cannot receive instruction without being obliged to learn sentiments at variance with those of his parents, and to go to the National Church. I know it is said, that such regulations will not be enforced. Any one who entertains that opinion, labours under a great fallacy. I do not believe, from anything that I have ever seen of Church of England schools, or of the clergy, that such a liberal course of proceeding will be adopted as that which it is intended to indicate; and I doubt whether this could be done according to the constitution of the schools and the deeds by which many of them are established, even if there were ever so much inclination to pursue a liberal course. It is enough that the Government comes and takes my property for the support of the Church; I protest against paying a further sum for the promotion of principles which involve this grievous wrong. I will say further, that, after a careful examination of all the documents put forth, I find considerable evidence of a tendency, in the course recommended by the Government inspectors, to teach principles of subserviency not only to the State but even to the Church of England; and these are not principle which on any consideration, I should be willing to extend.

Mr. TODMAN, of Yardley, (minister) wished to give an illustration which would tend to show the probable operation of the Government measure, if carried out. The population of the place in which he lived was about 1,100. He had erected day-schools, which were attended by about 120 children, and in his Sunday-school there were 225. The National School was mainly supported by a noble Marquis,—not the President of the Council [laughter], who was kind enough to permit boys educated in the National Day-school to come to his (Mr. Todman's) Sunday-school. He (Mr. Todman) had established a daily infant-school, which contained about 100 children. As soon as he did so, the clergyman obtained the assistance of the noble marquis in establishing one immediately opposite. These two schools had been in operation about three years, and continued to increase; the church school numbering about 25, and his own upwards of 100. He had about 600 of the population out of 1,100 under his pastoral care and general superintendence as respected their religious education. He was carrying on the whole at an expense of about eight shillings or ten shillings a week, and if any additional expense were incurred it must fall upon himself. Now, in the contemplation of such a measure as this he did not know what would become of his schools. He had no one so far as depended on but the penny per week from the parents. On the previous night an excellent gentleman connected with the corporation of that city, who had rendered him some assistance, said to him, "You must never ask me for any assistance again; the Government now propose to take this matter into its own hands, and that will dry up all my charity with respect to your schools" [hear, hear]. I really think that if, on account of this tendency alone, the most determined opposition should be offered to the measure.

Mr. WASHINGTON wished to present a few facts. A clergyman in Stockport went from door to door to catechise the children as to where they attended. He would go into a cottage and say, "Where do you go on the Sabbath-day?" "I attend at chapel." "Do you not know that your minister has no more right to preach than a cobbler—that he was never ordained by a bishop?" Thus he would go on putting these insulting questions to all our hearers until he failed utterly: his own party were disgusted with him, and his place sunk into a state of the greatest decay. I will mention what is said in reference to the school of which he had the superintendence, and in which a member of my own church was a teacher, who told me something of his practices. He taught the children manners. He called them into an ante-room and would say, "Boy, whenever you meet a clergyman you must pull off your hat; but you need not do that when you meet a dissenting minister" [hear, hear]. At page 315 of the first volume of the Minutes of Council on Education in 1845 the following is the report given of his school:—"The school-house, substantially built, and two stories high, will contain 1200 children. I found 230 miserable, ill-taught, and ignorant children assembled in it. £900 was contributed towards its erection by the Treasury and by the National Society, and £500 by Lady Vernon, and yet the building-fund remained, at the time of my inspection, £380 in debt. Nothing can be worse than the state of elementary education in Stockport, if, as I was informed, this is the best national school there." Mr. Bellairs has left his living, and is made an inspector. Ours is a religion of conviction and feeling; theirs is a kind of agricultural religion [laughter]; and I am now about to show you how Mr. Bellairs is developing himself. He is a man of respectable family, and honourable, I believe, in the relations of life. Speaking of the western district, he says:—"A good master, if he be not burdened with too many scholars, will have a good school. One system may probably appear to assist more in developing the intellectual faculties, another the disciplining of the moral powers. But the master can, in reality, reverse this; and, under whatever external circumstances he may be placed, a man of intelligence and firm resolve will become the genius of his school, and mould his pupils almost according to his will." Is it to be tolerated that a man of this spirit should hold in his hand the temporal support and destiny of thousands of children that may be apprentices, or anything he may nominate them to be, and who have to learn the doctrines of the catechism as he may understand them? who, when they go to bed at night, may not know but that their indentures will be cancelled, because they do not understand the catechism as he does?—[hear, hear.]

Mr. WHITE hoped that the resolution would not be mere waste paper; but that they would be determined not to vote for any man who would make a grant for ecclesiastical purposes. He hoped that the conference would feel that in passing the resolution they were, at the next election, pledged to carry it out. They did not hope in the borough of Bedford to be able to carry a Dissenter; but they could prevent an unconstitutional Whig from getting in.

JOSEPH CONDER, Esq., then read a letter appointing him a delegate for Christ Church, and enclosing £5 towards the expenses incurred by this opposition to the Government measure. The expenses would be great, and he trusted that the subscriptions would be liberal.

The CHAIRMAN then read the following letter:—

"Homerton College, Monday, April 12, 1847.

"My dear Friends,—It would have been my duty to have got myself made a delegate, in order to attend the momentous assembling of to-morrow; and I believe that I should certainly have done so, if I did not view myself as disqualified by my great affliction.

"Yet, I should deem it a privilege to sit and see, were it not the fact that duties which I can perform, numerous so as more than to demand all my time, important and imperative, leave me no lawful option.

"I therefore beg of you to adopt any method that you may deem best for preventing the notion (which some may entertain) that my absence on these great occasions arises from disaffection or lukewarmness.

"Also allow me to beg your understanding this communication as equally applying to the Anti-State-Church Association.

"I am, my dear friends, your obliged and

Devoted fellow-servant,

"J. P. SMITH.

"The Rev. Dr. Cox, the Rev. Robert Ainslie, and

J. M. Hare, Esq."

The reading of the letter was followed by loud cheers.

The conference then separated.

SECOND DAY.

Wednesday, April 14.

The Delegates re-assembled shortly after ten o'clock. Mr. Alderman KERSHAW, having taken the chair, said, that the Conference would take up the business where it was left off yesterday. He would not detain the meeting with any observations of his own.

Mr. J. H. HINTON, on the part of the Business Committee, read the resolutions which had been prepared to be submitted to the Conference. He also read the following extract from a letter received from Mr. J. Parsons, of York:—"I regret that my presence is incompatible in consequence of a public engagement of some standing and importance. My opposition to the contemplated measure is most unqualified and decided; my earnest and prayerful desire is, that the God who has averted so many dangers will now interpose to discomfit our enemies and his."

J. M. Hare, Esq., was appointed one of the Secretaries of the Conference.

Mr. R. AINSLIE, minister, requested, before the business commenced permission to read an extract of the *Daily News*. He solemnly declared he never was so ashamed of the public press of his country; he never felt so degraded as at this moment, with the *Daily News* in his hand—a paper which was getting extensive circulation in this country. The extract, as the Conference would see, contained the grossest calumny and falsehood that could be conceived. It is in a leading article:—

An assembly of divines has been collected for the special purpose of protecting the sacred rights of ignorance, and the constitutional privileges of vice; the self-called representatives of the Nonconformists of England have met to protest that the principles of the Pilgrim Fathers are naught, and those of the Jesuit Brothers the perfection of the excellence; then calling themselves liberal have come together to assert that the poor should be held in bondage to the casual charity of the superior classes, by being compelled to accept as a boon what they should claim as a right; people calling themselves patriots aver that the moral depravity of their countrymen renders it unsafe to tender to them the same advantages which are proffered to other nations; and advocates of civil and religious liberty have come together to show that ignorance of rights is essential to civil freedom, and that authorized instruction in the nature of obligations will be fatal to religious independence. Since the days of Robespierre there has been no such bold attempt to identify liberty with licentiousness [cries of "Shame!"]

This can only do harm to the *Daily News*. I hope that, as an act of justice—not revenge or retaliation—all those who have any influence upon the minds of persons disposed to read newspapers, will advise them to read those that contain the truth.

Dr. HAMILTON: It is only amusing.

Dr. GODWIN: When I see men scattering "fire-brands, arrows, and death," it does not amuse me.

Mr. W. FOSTER: I think that when the proprietors are made acquainted with the feelings of the body on whom the paper depends very much for its circulation, there will be an alteration in its articles.

Mr. J. POORE (of Salford) rose to move,

That this Conference cannot refrain from expressing its astonishment at the professions of impartiality put forth by the promoters of the Government scheme; professions, as it now appears, without even the shadow of a foundation, since the scheme is understood to exclude Roman Catholic schools; and professions which can have, under no circumstances, any real foundation, since the offer of State pay to those whose conscientious opinions are known to prohibit the reception of it, must be either an insult or a mockery.

In the spirit of this resolution I quite agree. I do not feel quite happy in the wording of the resolution. I hardly think it is worthy the gravity of a deliberative meeting. However, with that perhaps I am not to interfere, as it has been brought forward after some consideration, I presume. The scheme is libertine, not liberal; it is designed, I cannot doubt, to destroy the independence of religious principle, and to bring all parties down to a subjection to the State. I have long entertained these two ideas; first, that the Government saw very much liberality in its subjects, and we in England have rather more liberality than is quite consistent with the comfortable working of our Administration [hear, hear]; the second is, that no Government in this country, whether Whig or Tory, is very fond of an evangelical religion, because it seems to involve a principle that cannot be made subservient to State purposes.

Lord John Russell, the other day, in the House of Commons, very gratuitously told the House, when the Hon. Fox Maule was speaking of the grievances of the Free Church, of their inability to obtain sites for churches, that, while he sympathized, in some degree, in the object for which he was pleading, he had no sympathy with the Seceders. I do not think he has much sympathy with us, because we come in the way of their State purposes; therefore, they would like to endow all, that they might bring all into subjection [hear, hear]. The resolution says the measure is sectarian, because the Roman Catholic schools are to be excluded; this is not in the Minutes, though it is in the book that has come forth as authoritative. There is some intimation given to the Methodists, we are told, that the Catholics shall be excluded; that is, that the Authorized Version shall be read in the whole, and not in detached portions. But the Inspector of British schools in Lancashire, the other day, suggested a way out of that difficulty. It was this—that in schools where the Scriptures were read the Authorized Version should be used. Now, if a school chooses to do without the Scriptures,—that is, if his reading be correct, and only teaches religion, the Minutes requiring that the managers of schools shall certify that religion is taught, here is a way of escape for the Government; and whilst the Methodists are deluded, the Catholics are included [applause]. But, I presume, the Government must have known we could not co-operate in the carrying out of this measure. Will they regret it? I do not think they will. It is said, that Lord Morpeth, the other day, smiled when he was told of the movement that was going on in Yorkshire, in the anticipation of his voting not for the Government grant; and Lord John Russell did something like it. I believe we deserve their contempt, for we come together in a Conference like this when we are 300 strong; and we are full of courage; but when we go home, our courage oozes out at our fingers' ends, and we settle down in quietude. It is true, that we have other things to do; but I think that we ought not to say, we will do a certain thing, and not mean to do it. We ought not to speak loudly against acts of Government, and then never take a

single step in our own localities to carry our object into effect. An inspector of schools told me, that out of one hundred schools in the district he inspected, there were forty that would undoubtedly take the grant. They are Dissenting schools of various kinds. Those who protest, make objections, as we are doing to day—some going to one extent, and some to the extreme length—but many will take the grant [hear, hear]. Now, we do require consistency amongst ourselves, if we would require that Government should be consistent. If we would be respected, we must be respectable, be consistent in what we say and do, and then we shall obtain power in the country, and with the Government. But, until we follow up, by steady perseverance, that course of action which, in times of excitement, we resolve upon taking, we shall never obtain that moral influence which our numbers and long tried character would justify us in possessing in the country [cheers].

Mr. P. MORLEY, of Hull (minister), said: I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution. I sympathize with the gentleman who has moved the resolution as to one or two words that are employed. I am in entire accordance with its spirit. As I am the only person at this Conference who has the honour of representing the sentiments of gentlemen in Hull as regards this measure, perhaps it may be as well if I just state who are the parties whose sentiments I have the honour to represent. I come here as delegated by what we denominate a General Educational Committee. That Committee consists of several denominations of Christians—Episcopalians, members of the Society of Friends, Congregationalists, Baptists, members of the Methodist New Connexion, Primitive Methodists, Independent Methodists, and the Wesleyan Association. It will very easily be conceived that a Committee, consisting of so many parties, will entertain various opinions upon this great question. In consequence of this I feel some degree of delicacy—more than an ordinary delicacy—as to the position in which I stand. Several of the gentlemen of the Committee, I think it is quite right to say, are very strongly opposed to any interference of Government with the education of the people; and I believe they would not be satisfied, or think that I had faithfully discharged the trust committed to me, if I did not distinctly make that statement. There are gentlemen, however, connected with that committee who do not go entirely that length. I felt anxious to fix upon some great principle in which, I apprehend, nearly the whole of that committee would be agreed; and I believe they would all agree in this—that Government has no right to tax one man for the religion of another. I think that would be a fair test to try this measure, or any amendment that can be proposed upon it [hear, hear.] To say religion is not to be taxed, is an evasive way of putting the question. If religion is taxed in any way, we cannot exempt ourselves from the charge of taking money to teach religion [loud cheers]. I think the ground that one man is not to be taxed for the religion of another, is tangible ground, and would prevent us from changing our opinions. I confess, at one time, I thought that Government might interfere in education; but I have seen reason to alter my sentiments. A large portion of the Protestant Dissenters in this country have not been disposed to be very prominent in asserting their peculiar and denominational principles; but the fact is, that ecclesiastical projects are occupying much attention, and it would be very remarkable, if all other portions of the community were on the alert, and the Protestant Dissenters were to remain inactive. I have not been able, hitherto, to join the Anti-state-church Association, but I throw out whether we could not take up one practical question—that of church-rates [cries of "No, no"]. I think that many would unite with us on this question. But I will not occupy further time.

Mr. H. RICHARDS (of Marlborough Chapel) said: I have received a communication from a large number of my countrymen in various parts of Wales, asking me to stand up on behalf of our country, and to seek permission to say a few words in regard to the special bearing of this measure on the state of society there. It is the firm conviction of those best acquainted with the state of things in Wales, that the tendency of this measure will be most fatal and disastrous to the influence which Dissent has happily acquired in the Principality [hear, hear]. It is no secret to you, that nearly the whole population of Wales are Dissenters. As an illustration of this, let me mention, that, although the population does not amount to quite a million of people, they have more than 2,000 Dissenting chapels, all of which have been erected within the last century by voluntary contributions alone [cheers]. They have also a very considerable number of school-houses, which have been erected on the same system [cheers]. The National School, under the guidance of the Bishop of St. David's, has been making special efforts within the last eighteen months to raise an educational fund for Wales. That eminent prelate, when he first became Bishop of St. David's, addressed himself with admirable diligence to ascertain the state of society there, and the prospects of the Church. In the first charge he delivered he gave utterance to this sentiment:—"It is obvious that the Church has lost its influence upon the population of Wales, and the only chance of recovering it is by seizing the young mind, and endeavouring to educate that" [loud cries of "hear, hear"]. He set forward a subscription, to which all the bishops have added their names, and a fund of £40,000 has been raised, which is to be laid out at the rate of £4,000 per annum for the next ten years in the erection of school-houses. It is known that a small amount of money will go very far in Wales, because labour and materials are exceedingly cheap. This £40,000, therefore, will do great execution in the Principality. The Marquis of Lansdowne, in expounding the Minutes of Council, stated that in thinly populated districts, such as in many parts of Wales, there could be but one school; and those who will have the preference will, in fact, be those who are the richest. We know that although the great bulk of the Welsh are Dissenters, yet the squirearchy belong to the Establishment, and they will advance the money to

enable the Church to obtain the benefit arising from the proposed measure, while the £40,000 will also be employed in the same direction. What will be the result? why, that schools connected with the Established Church will be founded throughout Wales; and this vast system of bribery will be brought to bear upon the poor people there, in order to undermine their Dissenting principles [cheers]. Now, I do think that if any deputation is appointed to go from this Conference to see the Marquis of Lansdowne, that some one should be requested to represent Wales; and to put before his lordship the peculiar hardship with which this measure must bear upon the Principality. A hundred years ago Wales was in a state of semi-barbarism, although at that time there were parishes scattered all over its surface, and clergymen—well paid clergymen—in all these parishes. I hold in my hand a book which contains a short biographical sketch of a venerable Calvinistic minister who died some years ago at the advanced age of ninety. Before his death, he was requested by some younger brethren to put down the reminiscences of his earlier days with regard to the state of Wales at that time, and he says, there was not then one in five hundred of the people that could read; nay, he goes further, and he says that "It was credibly reported to me that, in the Isle of Anglesea, there were clergymen of the Church of England so little instructed, that they could scarcely correctly read the service in their own tongue" [hear, hear]. That was the state of Wales a hundred years ago. And what is the state of Wales now? I believe that, in very many parts, in very many counties, it would be a difficult thing to meet a single individual that could not read the Holy Scriptures intelligibly in his own tongue. The Government have once and again done the grievous wrong to the Welsh of sending men to inquire into the state of education there, who were wholly ignorant of the Welsh language and the habits of the people; and because they met with persons on the high roads, and asked them questions to which they were unable to reply in the English language, they have concluded that they were in a state of gross ignorance and barbarism. Upon the ground of representations like these, that have been made by men utterly ignorant of the state of Wales, that country has been held up both in and out of Parliament as being in a state of great degradation. I deny that this is its character. I venture to offer proof, that comparing classes together, there is not the same amount of population in this country that is equal to the inhabitants of Wales in Scriptural knowledge and moral character [cheers].

[A note was handed up to the Chairman from a gentleman who had come from the House of Commons, and who stated, that he had seen in one of the metropolitan newspapers, that a notice of motion had been given to the House of Commons bearing on the subject.]

Mr. AINSLIE, minister, here handed to the speaker one of the morning papers, from which he read the notice of motion given by Mr. Thomas Duncombe which was received with loud cheers.—The motion is given elsewhere.]

The resolution was then put, and carried unanimously.

Mr. AINSLIE wished to know whether there was authority for the statement contained in the resolution, that the Roman Catholics were to be excluded from the Government scheme?

Several gentlemen stated circumstances which had come to their knowledge, showing that there could be no doubt of it.

Dr. LEGER, of Leicester, said: I am one of six deputed by the Committee in Leicester to represent twelve congregations, and one of three appointed by the Dissenters of the county, representing between seventy and eighty congregations, to visit her Majesty's Ministers on the subject of the Minutes of Council: and am especially glad that the resolution which I have now to present to the meeting is one every way in harmony with the general views of my constituents. It is to the following effect:—

That in the judgment of this Conference, the unsatisfactory issue of the efforts which successive Governments have made to extend the patronage of popular education, may be held to demonstrate the impossibility of their doing so with either benefit or safety, and to afford decisive practical evidence in support of a principle which has already found strenuous advocates, and which this Conference now avows, namely, that it is not within the province of Government to educate the people.

I do not, perhaps, go all the lengths of some of my constituents, nor of some of the gentlemen now present; but I think, upon the whole, the Conference will agree with me when I state my views, that I do not deserve to be put in the rank of a heretic. On the one hand, I contend that it is not the duty of Government, and does not fall within their province, to educate the people; for, if it be the duty of Government to do so, then it is right that they should put in requisition all the resources of the State to enable them to discharge their duty. If it is their duty, then the present plan is a legitimate measure. The Government may say that the Dissenters cannot educate the people, that the Church people will not, and that they must do it. We should like to give them secular instruction only, but the views of the country will not allow it. What, then, is the Government to do, but the best it can? But then, on the other hand, I cannot see that a Government may not, though it may not be its duty, or within its province, do something towards the education of the people, or any other thing that it considers for the good of the country. Why may it not resolve itself into a committee of the whole nation for the general good? Why may it not erect a museum, or give a grant to a mechanics' institution? There are many things which I can conceive it possible for it to do as the committee of the whole nation. If the whole country were of one religion or creed—were of no religion, or all religionists were on a level, I should think once and again before I rejected a measure if it were likely to be beneficial to the country, and would not injure anybody. But I contend that in the existing circumstances of the country the thing is not possible. It is impossible for the Government to do anything without connecting religion with the business of education; and while parties are as they are, it is, in my judgment, altogether impracticable. The man who

can believe that Government can introduce a measure satisfactory to all classes, when the popular voice demands that religion should be a part of education, and our rulers are nine-tenths Churchmen—the man who believes that that is possible must have a large faculty of imagination, and as large an organ of credulity as of charity [cheers]. Every Government measure must throw a large portion of education into the hands of the clergy, but what proof have we that they would act for their best interests, and for the enlargement of the mind and elevation of the moral being of the lower classes? Is there an intelligent and graceful civilization in the districts where their influence is predominant? If we cannot think of the time when it would have been safe to commit the education of the people to the hands of the clergy, as it would virtually be by this, or any Government measure—is the time come now, when the spirit of the dark ages seems to have come back on the church, and with it, the spirit of bigotry and intolerance of those ages [cheers]—when many of them are ready to wipe the name of Protestant from their brow—to brand the Reformation as a robbery, and the great revolution as a rebellion? [cheers.] Can we trust those who form a considerable leaven, if not a large portion of the clergy, with the education of the people; and men of Oxford, of rank and learning, to whom we have been accustomed to look up to as the oracles and guides of the people—men who have lost their wits amid the rubbish of national antiquity—men who have clothed their understandings in the straight-waistcoats of the Fathers—men who have sold their common sense for worse than old wives' fables—men of senility and dotage all their own? [cheers.] The Government would have us turn over the children of our country to their hands to be nurtured and led by them wheresoever they would [cheers], to be led to hear them at church or at whatsoever place their sweet voices may be uttered. They would have us go with them and take our children to the old mother of Rome and their now new idol of a Pope [cheers]. Shall we allow the people of England to be dealt with thus in this country? Are they Calmucks who churn out their prayers from a mill—are they Papists who worship old rage in the shape of an old coat [laughter]. They must be something like that [cheers]. They must have lost their senses, they must have abjured their language, have gone back to the dark ages, and thrown around themselves, and thrown around their free-born minds and free-moving limbs the swaddling bands of babyhood [cheers]. But no, it will not be—it cannot be—the people of England have already learned, notwithstanding their want of schools, some truth which some parties have not perceived. They have learned that which will not allow them to bow to the State or the Church [cheers]. If the measure were to pass with all its faults upon it, I should not, for one, be afraid. The genius of England will not be bound; and let those who would bind it look to themselves [cheers]. I cannot forbear one remark with reference to the resolution just passed, and the spirit in which it conceived that our rulers had dealt with us in this matter. I have committed myself to the approval of those words that excited some disturbance in the delicate nerves of some of our friends, and I felt, after all, that they were the right words. The resolution I hold in my hand refers back to former administrations, and to former attempts to interfere with the education of the people. We had in our minds Sir James Graham's measure and his olive-branch, which went through the length and breadth of the country as the fire-cross used to go through the glens and vales of Scotland in times past; and it roused the Dissenters as that roused the mountaineers [cheers]. We remember the loathing with which we read his apologies for his measure, his kindness towards the Dissenters, and his pure patriotic desire to promote the interests and welfare of all. We were not more surprised at that conduct on his part, because we knew the nature of a renegade Whig who had become a Tory [cheers.] But what shall we say to the manner in which the Whigs have brought forward this measure? We have fought under their banners, and some of us have made sacrifices to bring their adherents into Parliament. We looked upon them as identified with progressive freedom; and now they come with a measure most insulting to us, and which, in its tendency, would be altogether ruinous. They remind me of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, when he took Abner aside to speak silently with him in the gate, and then stabbed him under the fifth rib [hear, hear]. It appeared to me, that their measure came to us veiled in a shower of shadowing roses, while underneath there is that Laocoon which would entwine and strangle the liberties of our children [cheers]. I cannot but feel strongly with regard to those who have introduced this measure, and who look to us as if they had treated us fairly. There is a spirit in us which they thought was dead, but which was only sleeping, and only wants galling to stir us to new action; a spirit of clear intelligence, and vigorous arm, and indomitable resolution; the spirit which, taking possession of this island of ours, has made a paradise of its surface; a spirit which has evolved a literature which commands the wonder of the world; the spirit which has gone abroad and made the name of Englishmen a name of wonder everywhere [cheers]. Let us tell them that that spirit is still strong in us, and with it there is blended the old spirit of the Nonconformists and the Cameronians, who withstood the stern despotism of a brutal Queen and the stolid despotism of the infatuated Stuarts, and which amid a storm of blood and fire led one King to the block, and sent another abroad as a fugitive and a vagabond—that spirit which, after such a storm, introduced the great revolution in 1680, the origin and fountain-head of our constitutional liberties. I need not say what that spirit has done since, and under the auspices of these men. That spirit still lives in us, and let us tell them that it will declare its life in such forms as they have not anticipated. Let us tell them that the constitution of England shall not be changed—that the State shall not intrude itself into our schools and families—that we will not entrust the destinies of the children of the people of England to the guardianship of the Church—that we will not, as far as in us lies, have this or any other measure of the

kind—that we will not have this man to rule over us [loud cheers].

Mr. COCKIN of Holmfirth, (minister), said: I assert, as a preliminary principle, that the governments of the earth have no right to meddle in the business of education in any shape or form [cheers]. The business of legislation is overdone, and the great folly of these men is to intermeddle in what they had much better let alone. All that we ask of them is, that they will protect us in the enjoyment of our rights and property, and in all other particulars leave us to ourselves. What we depend upon is the blessing and the protection of God and our own exertions [cheers]. All that relates to religion should be left to the consciences of men,—all that relates to trade, to the interests of men; and as to this intermeddling, the mischief it has done cannot be told. There are before me a number of persons who have attained sixty years of age, and when the cause of liberty has called you forth, you have given your services. In the efforts made to obtain the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the abolition of the Slave-trade, and the repeal of the Corn-laws, what years were spent, what large sums were wasted and efforts made, to do no good, but merely to restrain evil,—to counteract the effects of this intermeddling! [cheers]. Those who have hitherto ruled over religion and over trade are now for extending their jurisdiction and ruling over education. I have stated that I have not looked into details; but there are two particulars that I will mention. The certain effect of the plan now proposed will be to enslave the subjects of education, and reduce a large number to vassalage—to make the Government scheme so powerful that voluntary efforts will have little chance of success. Education is to be religious; and, that it may be religious, the Church Catechism is to be taught. Just look at what the Church has done in the business of education. When a child is born it is to be baptized; and that it may not lose education through the incompetency of the parents, sponsors are appointed, and they do promise and vow, on the part of that child, that it shall renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and the sinful lusts of the flesh. I am not a good Churchman, and cannot recollect the rest.

Dr. HAMILTON: "The devil and all his works!" [laughter and loud cheers].

Mr. T. BINNEY: And shall believe all the articles of the Christian faith.

Mr. COCKIN: The child is also said to be made "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." That is the way they have managed the business of education. Of all the absurdities that have been introduced into education, has there been one more gross than that sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority! But I protest against this intermeddling at the commencement; for, if it goes on, where will it stop? You may have more measures of this kind. Dr. Johnson, who was a high Churchman and a Tory, said that marriages would be a great deal better if they were made by the Lord Chancellor, and another person was for compelling every one to be married by licence. If Government are to furnish you with schoolmasters, they may carry their kindness further, and take it into their heads to make your matches, and furnish you with wives [loud cheers]. Some one has before observed, that there must be a separation of Church and State. The Church has come to me as it has gone to others, with her demands. In the reign of Henry VIII. there was a Countess of Somerset charged with treason. She was condemned to be executed, and they required her to lay her head down conveniently that it might be taken off. She, however, ran about the scaffold and said: "I will do no such thing, you must get it as you can." And I tell them, that if they want my money, they must get it as they can [loud cheers]. However, I could not be angry with the parties who made the seizure. They seemed ashamed of their business; and one man said, that he had seen better days, but when a man was brought into his circumstances, he was obliged to do what he did not like. At that time they seized a ham. They were about to take it to the vicar; and the man who took it said, that he hoped it might poison him [laughter]. Such has been the result, that they have put me into the hospital of incurables, and of late years do not meddle with me on the subject [cheers]. I consider myself as strong a Nonconformist as any in the districts where I reside; but I consider that what I have done for the cause as little in comparison with what has been done for it by our opponents [cheers]. Lord Sidmouth did more for the Dissenters than any other man. We sink into a state of apathy, we want rousing from time to time, and when these efforts come forth, they give an impulse to our minds which they would not otherwise have received. All the efforts for liberty have succeeded the most dangerous attacks ever made upon us. Such was the case in the time of Queen Anne, who died on the very day that the Schism Bill was to come into operation, and the measure was defeated. I do not pretend to say what will be the result of the present movement; but I am satisfied that it will work for the advancement of the Dissenting cause, and the increase of our principles. It is vexatious, however, that the attack should come from Lord John Russell and Lord Morpeth, men for whom I have felt a strong attachment [hear, hear]. We must give the measure our decided and determined opposition; and whether we triumph or fall, we are sure that the integrity of our principles will show that we are worthy descendants of those illustrious men to whom Great Britain is indebted for the high distinction she holds among the nations of the earth [cheers].

Messrs. STURGE and BAINES announced that they had waited upon Mr. John Bright, who had consented, at much inconvenience to himself, to take the chair at the Aggregate Meeting [loud cheers].

Mr. HAWKINS, of Bradford, Wilts, minister, said there is no need to scorn us because we are divines. I was sent by my people, some of whom appointed me, with tears in their eyes, because they saw, that under this measure they would be obliged to let their children learn things which they deemed injurious to them, or they would lose their education [hear, hear]. If the

Government wishes to act beneficially in the promotion of education, the best thing they can do is to take the burdens off the shoulders of the poor, that they may be able to pay for their own education. At Bradford, if they let us alone, we can carry on the work of education. Every means, however, that can be resorted to, are adopted, in order to take away our children. The Dissenters ought to come boldly forward at the hustings, and give a demonstrative proof of their power [cheers]. We do well to educate each other. The clergy need instruction,—the Government need instruction; many Dissenters are in the same position; and many that are instructed need courage. In the county of Wilts we can do but little; and it is necessary, therefore, that the people of London should stand well with the country. We heard yesterday some excellent things about the House of Commons being the people's house. I wish it were so; and there is nothing that can educate the Government so well, as honest, determined votes, at the hustings [cheers]. In order that London may stand well, let us have a Thompson, a Miall, a Sturge, and a Vincent, and then I think we shall follow you [cheers].

Dr. HAMILTON: I am not anxious to speak against the motion, but the speech of the mover. I rise in pain, but I do it with the conscientious conviction that Dr. Legge does appear, by his reserved points, to have betrayed the principle of the resolution. These are the men that are ever philosophizing, and are incapable of generalization. They consider how far education might be undertaken by the Government in certain contingencies, and say that, if there were no Establishment it would be an excellent thing for the Government to do. These are the men who betray our cause [cries of "No, no"].

Mr. C. STOVEL (minister) said: I would not have risen to occupy a moment of time, unless I had felt it to have been a point of importance in my own judgment; and, if I should trespass on the time more than is right, I hope you will remind me, Sir, of it, and I have done in an instant. I confess, for my own part, that the resolution which is now before you is the one on which are suspended all the interests for which you are concerned [hear, hear]. And I have not much doubt with respect to its being carried here; but I have some doubt respecting the effect which will follow on the general mind, and on the minds of the men employed in the Government, from the manner and the circumstances under which it will be carried. Of all things, as it appears to me, the most important for us to consider, is to obtain, if possible, perfect unanimity. The phalanx of a divided front may be very easily and very soon destroyed; but, if its form can be kept firm and bold, we may then invite the steadfast assault of many opponents; and I feel that we are quite justified in using all our efforts to secure both the best position we can take, and also the best method of possessing it. I hold here the *Morning Chronicle*, which conceded to us one very important principle—"The Dissenters of England are the real fathers of its popular education." This is a fact never to be forgotten. Then, being a Dissenter, I may in this sense be allowed, in some measure, to cherish the feeling, if not of a father, one of many fathers [laughter] and I think that it would not be too much to ask of us all to exercise some fatherly care over that which is acknowledged to be our offspring. Popular education, then, asks of us a fatherly love, a fatherly care, in protecting and in nourishing; and in nothing, as I think, can we exercise that love and Christian care more legitimately than in protecting the cot of the child from the approach of the devourer; and I use this expression in order to remove some of the imputations which have been thrown upon the advocates engaged in this movement. It is said they are warm, they are sectarian, they are ardent; and I have sometimes seen a mother roused by the hazard of and affection for her child; and I should say that the Dissenters of England were unworthy of popular education, if they did not, when they saw it exposed to danger, rise up in their might and plead for it with ardour. I feel this important at any time, certainly, but the more so when the hazard—the great point before us—is created mainly by the members of our own house [hear, hear]. And what I wish is, in the manner of passing your resolution, there should be at least a unanimity of feeling respecting the sentiments expressed in this paragraph, which I will just read to you, issued by one of the members of your Conference, and commented upon in the leading article of the *Morning Chronicle* of to-day. The paragraph is this:—"Were all that is said about religious teaching in these Minutes omitted, and three lines inserted in their place, saying in effect; of the religious instruction given in the schools aided by its grants, the Committee does not take any cognizance, except to require that it shall be given at particular hours, and that the attendance of the scholars at these hours should be optional with their parents and guardians,—were this done, the difficulty I have pointed out would be removed. Some Dissenters would, perhaps, still object; but, in my judgment, they must then object as citizens, not as religious men. Surely to pray for thus much is not to seek what is partial or unreasonable. Will it be refused?" [cries of "name"]? This is from the pen of Dr. Vaughan, whom we heard yesterday. We have a letter, in the same paper, from Dr. Hoppus, and his statements are less cautiously drawn than this statement which I have read, and implicate us further. And what I wish very much indeed to urge upon my brethren is, to give all due, solemn, conscientious consideration to the sentiments here avowed, and consider with ourselves carefully, suppose these concessions were made to you by the Government; whether you would fall quietly under its influence [cries of certainly not]. I for one would never stand quietly by, though, when I had acquired my conscience, I must of course fall in my place; but I should never stand quietly by and allow, even with a silent negative, the statement to pass or the position to be assumed. I hold that, on many grounds, such a statement is very objectionable—[hear, hear]—not only objectionable in itself, but in the manner and in the time of advancing it, adapted to betray the brethren into the hands of our adversaries. If I could—

JOSIAH CONDER, Esq.: I think we ought not to refer

to Dr. Vaughan in his absence. I think our resolutions are what commit us. Those resolutions are most explicit.

Dr. HAMILTON: The conduct of a delegate is a matter of notoriety, and before this assembly.

Dr. MASSIE: I belong to the deputation of which Dr. Vaughan is a member [great interruption].

Mr. STOVEL: I shall not be intimidated. Let us be calm.

Dr. MASSIE: I stand here as Dr. Vaughan's colleague. I am not going to intimidate Mr. Stovel, and you all know that I am not to be intimidated either. What I wish to say is, that Dr. Vaughan wrote that letter in his own private character. He is not the representative of the delegation in that letter. No member of the Lancashire delegation is implicated in it but himself; and all that we felt, when he showed it to us, was, that he had liberty to express any opinion he pleased. His judgment of its becoming the question of a citizen or the question of a Nonconformist, remains entirely with himself.

Mr. C. STOVEL: There could be no question about that; but yet there can be no question but that we may take his statement of the case, and his terms, as the basis on which to consider the principle; and the more so, because with applause he was heard in our assembly yesterday; and I am inclined to think that it behoves us, with not ordinary patience, to direct our thoughts to the considering of the whole of this great question, and I wish very much that all our brethren who are advancing to this measure, and saying with reservation, there may be an abstract case—I very much wish, indeed, that they would lead us somewhere within the region of that abstract case, and tell us, whether we can find it in Paradise or in the moon. I know that that abstract case has been put forth as long ago as Plato, and we know perfectly well that it has been discussed in various circles from that time to this—the abstract case of a Government educating its people. It has been tossed into all shapes; but I have never found, from the time of Plato, that abstract case which we could ever think of bringing into operation; and, therefore, when we have to deal with things in the concrete, which are like the rolling ball, that licks up the mass, by every turn accumulating evil; or which are accumulating like the river dammed into a lake, until, like an avalanche, its weight shall rise, overcome all resistance, and sweep and smash forests and towns, and all that earth possesseth, in its channel—I do not think we are to weaken our position by referring to some abstract question conceived in the moon, and out of the range of all human practice, and thus tie our hands in dealing with this great question before us [cheers]. A short few years ago—and it is very instructive for a man to look back on twelve years of an active life—many Dissenting ministers pleaded in this city on the abstract principle of aiding religious instruction by grants from the State, and unquestionably they thus crossed the path of every practical movement that was introduced. The Ecclesiastical Society, the Voluntary Church Society, and the Anti-state-church Association, as they arose, were all crossed by this supposed abstract principle; and whilst this abstract case was held in their imagination, we were led into different positions, which betrayed our interests and paralyzed our strength; and I am thankful to find that, day by day, this great abstract principle respecting Church and State becomes more and more yielded to us [cheers]. I cannot help thinking, that some calm consideration of this matter will lead my brethren towards a similar unity respecting the abstract question of State education. In my mind, it seems to me that the question should be—not whether, in any case, supposing men as pure as they were in Paradise before the fall, and that rulers as amiable and holy as Gabriel and Michael, and the archangels, were entrusted with our civil protection; we are not to consider it with respect to that; but our great question is this—Where can children, confessedly corrupt, be best put for their education? We know there is the element of depravity and corruption in the mind of man. And further, it ought to be considered in the question, whether these children, rising up with this known character, can be entrusted to such a Government as we have? and I think we should never arrive at any conclusion without carefully considering that point. As for the second question, it seems to me, without any imputation of character whatever, the matter comes to be clearly decided by a most obvious fact. Our Government have, unquestionably, legitimate trusts committed to their care. They have a legitimate province, within which they may exercise their functions. It needs not that we should very carefully define that now. Allow us only to think that they are entrusted with the protection of certain interest at home and abroad. The question is before I load these men with an additional burden, how have these trusts been executed. Now look at it calmly as Englishmen. There is no imagination about it. Ministers have enough to do before they have settled the great questions in hand, and to load them with additional care would be cruelty to them and injustice to ourselves. That point brings the question just within the range of Dr. Vaughan's remarks, and those who think with him. It is said, Let us educate the people and we will render the administration of justice more facile, the movements of Government more easy; we will introduce these educational measures, and thereby save the expense of police, and gaols, and gaol discipline. It is only on this point that the plea can be urged of entrusting Government with education, and before this plea can be advanced there are several points that require to be carefully considered.

Several gentlemen here cried "Time;" but after some interruption, there was a general call for Mr. Stovel to proceed.

Mr. STOVEL: The first question is, Will education without religion diminish the amount of crime? To this I answer, that in order to effect this, it must be extended to the formation of those habits which involve the dictates of conscience; and therefore it can never accomplish the object proposed, unless it become religious [hear, hear]. Secondly, suppose it be granted to our brethren Hoppus and Vaughan, that the Minutes are altered as they propose, and that the Committee of Council should say, "We will not interfere

with the religion that is introduced," what will be its result practically? The schools will be the arena for religious parties. The clergyman and the Dissenting minister, the Church and the Dissenting subscriber, will enter, without the cognizance of the Government, into the conflict of religious principles in the schools. A case has recently occurred of a school sustained by the Voluntary principle, originated by the Dissenters, where the Church people admitted on the committee thought it their duty to teach the Catechism, and, worried out, at length the Dissenters have been obliged to retire [hear, hear]. If Government is to legalize a system of paying indifference to religion, the habit will be formed of leading the children to conduct their studies without reference to God [hear]. My opinion is that we mistake. I say that an ungodly education never has been, and perhaps never will be, the means of preventing crime. If you are to take a step in the prevention of crime, education must embrace the whole man—the conscience and the heart, as well as the hand and the judgment; and in order to accomplish its effect, it must be of a character that shall commend itself to the approval and blessing of God. It was this that made me determine on addressing you this morning. I feel that it is a point that lies at my heart [loud cheers]. What is the spectacle presented to you? Here is a Government giving £2,500,000. I will suppose them bowing down and praying for God's blessing upon the work. Suppose we were listening, and we were to ask the petitioners to say, which of your works do you wish to be blessed?—shall the blessing descend on the Papistry of Ireland? If not, why are you supporting it? Is the unction of the Holy One to descend on your operations in Scotland? If not, why are those operations continued? Are your petitions to be heard, and the blessings of the Holy One to descend on those parties called Dissenters in England, whom you have discouraged in your publications? If not, why are your operations so conducted? Are the blessings to be poured out on the log Juggernaut, protected by the Government? [hear, hear]. Remember, that if you are to have an education, it should be one that appeals to heaven's blessing, or else it should never have effect; and if it does, then it must accord with your own free, hearty, and conscientious conviction, and be aided by the vigour of your own voluntary labours. In order to be blessed of heaven, it must be pious, and it must be free [cheers]. The only other point to which I will refer, is the importance of having our minds firmly fixed on this topic. It has been pleaded that there are already interferences of the Government with education, and which are used as the basis of the *argumentum ad hominem*. It has been argued that, by taking the *Regium Donum*, we are forfeiting our consistency, and that, by taking Government grants for rewards, and so forth, in the London University, we are conceding the principle of Government interference. My impression is, that, if Dr. Vaughan and Dr. Hoppus had never been schooled in that London University, they would not have entertained the sentiments they do [cries of "No, no"]. My opinion is that, in order that you may have effect on others, you must take your own principle, and nothing but the principle, and lean upon it—the duty being ours and the result God's [cheers].

Mr. J. BLACKBURN (minister): It is with great emotion I rise to address you; and I would do it in the fear of God and with the highest respect to my brethren present. At the same time that we are contending for liberty, assuredly liberty to speak in the Conference is the very first thing that should be conceded among free men. I hope I shall not be interrupted by any unkind expressions, because that may prevent my saying what I wish to say; yet, I cannot honestly, or having self-respect, go from this Hall without entering my protest against the manner that some parties, present and absent, have been dealt with. I am here as the opponent of the Minutes of Council, and a convert, but by slow degrees, to the principle involved in your resolution. Now it does not become a man that has changed his opinion in ten years, and almost ten weeks, to be vaunting about the opinion he has taken, and to talk otherwise than with modesty of the opinions of others [hear, hear]. That I may help this tone of feeling, allow me to remind you that we Dissenters did take Government money for education in the West Indies—that we did take Government patronage in the national system in Ireland—and the Congregational body in London did publish a resolution eulogizing and commending that system of national education in Ireland. In 1839 we were all so ardent in our new love to the Government that we do not remember what we said; but I lately took a volume of Hansard and read the debates on the first presentation of these Minutes, when the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Stanley, and Mr. Disraeli said the things we are saying now, but we did not see them. "A gift blindeth the eyes," and though we were not looking for gifts, yet our friendship did blind our eyes. I should like to have read some of Mr. Disraeli's statements in the House of Commons which amount to the aphorisms you are now propounding, and which we were overlooking [cheers]. In 1843, when the Congregational body met, Dr. Hamilton, who rarely says hard things, and never unkind ones, did use words that pained me, about those who betrayed us, because we are all opponents of the measure,—some come by express-train from Leeds, and others come by an omnibus [laughter], but, in 1843, he yielded, for peace and love's sake, to the affirmation of a principle we were not all then convinced of. But at that time what did our Baptist brethren do? The Baptist Union in 1843 did not follow the leadings of the Congregationalists in affirming your principle, but they put out a resolution that they would stand by the British and Foreign School Society, which is taking £700 or £800 per annum from Government up to the present day. I do not know that they have revoked that resolution. If they are converted, I am glad to find that the work of conversion is going on so hopefully [cheers]. I must, however, say, that I grieve that Dr. Vaughan should be thought of otherwise than as a high-minded man, as one of the pillars of Nonconformity, who has kept himself from the bosom of his family and from the rest that nature demanded, that he might expound to the rising youth the great historical facts connected with our cause. I think that,

by his literary labours, his eminent personal religion, and manly dignity and bearing, he deserves the respect and affection of all [hear, hear]. I hope I am not misunderstood. I drew up the resolution which the three denominations passed, and the result was, that I was placed at the head of the deputation to address the Premier. There are gentlemen present who know that I told Lord John Russell, that since we had stood by him to carry the Reform Bill, we had been the most down-trodden and ill-used people in the kingdom. I told his lordship, that there was not an esquire or parson that did not think he had a right to injure the Dissenting tradesman, and to take away from the poor their employments and their little charities [hear]. I further added, that it was enough to stir the blood of any Englishman, and asked how he could expect that system to be strengthened without resistance? I hope I may now leave with a clean bill of health [laughter]—and shall not be suspected of being one of the betrayers. We have gone on by degrees, but our friends must be thankful that we have come to their standard [cheers].

Mr. J. HINTON (minister): I should not have risen but for the allusion to the Baptist Union, of which I am Secretary. All that Mr. Blackburn has said is quite true; but he has not stated all the truth. When the British and Foreign School Society convened a conference on education, about the time of Sir James Graham's Bill, several Baptist ministers and friends attended it. At that time the Society had not received absolutely one farthing of Government money, but they had consented to receive £5,000, conditionally, towards their Normal-school [hear, hear]. They have permission to return it; and they have, as I understand, that money at the bank this day. They have also since consented to receive £750. Our vote must be held irrespective of that. In the discussions at that Conference, I believe that all—certainly several—of the Baptist ministers protested loudly against that Society receiving Government money. I did so myself; and we spoke in the most persuasive and earnest manner that we could to prevent them receiving more Government money, and to induce them to return that conditionally received. At that time it was stated distinctly, that no support could be expected by that Society, from the churches generally, if they did take public money. If the report of the Conference had been published, our words would have appeared; and, indeed, they do appear in print in the imperfect report presented. Since that time the British and Foreign School Society have received a grant. It is true the Baptist Union have not adopted a resolution on that point. Let us have a little time till we meet again, and then judge of us by our deeds [cheers]. I pledge myself that a motion to that effect shall be brought forward, and if I be any prophet I do pledge myself that it shall be carried,—that on that ground a recommendation shall go forth in the usual manner that no further support shall be given to the British and Foreign School Society. With respect to the motion before the chair, I declare my adherence to it in the broadest and simplest manner possible. It cannot be consistent with the duty of Government anywhere, in any circumstances, to meddle with the education of the people [cheers]. I think it essentially a religious education that is proposed. I hold that the Government are as absolutely bound to leave untouched education as they are the preaching of the Gospel, and to the utmost of my power they shall be constrained to let alone both one and the other [cheers].

Dr. LEECHES: May I be allowed to explain or retract? If I were one of those who betray the principles of Dissenters, I am sure I dare not show my face again to my constituents in Leicester, with the stigma of traitor on my brow. With all Mr. Stovel's statements and conclusions I concur. I do not rise to throw the feeble shield of defence over Dr. Vaughan. I have heard with exceeding pain his lucubrations on this subject [hear, hear]. I entirely concur in the principle of this motion, and of the resolution I moved, namely, that the education of the people does not fall within the province of the State. But, in the philosophy which the Scotch schools have given me, I have been led to look at subjects on many sides, and I thought I would throw in the second observation, in order somewhat to meet the position of Dr. Vaughan and others. They contend that they can conceive of a state of society where Government may do so and so; but it must be a state as far off as the moon, and my position went to this, that the condition of the people, so long as the Government cannot educate religiously, must continue for ever.

Mr. STURGE said: Some of our Baptist friends were the first to come forward in the British and Foreign Schools, to support the principle, that Government money should be taken. A proposition was made, to leave it to the Committee, and I moved that, under no circumstances, should the money be taken [cheers]. The feeling was so strong, that we could have carried it, but they requested that we should withdraw the amendment, if they withdrew the resolution. I confess that I did this under the confidence that the money would not be taken without an appeal to the subscribers at large. I hope that, before a week is over, we shall ascertain the feelings of the Committee; and that, before the Society is condemned, I trust we shall raise the money, and give it back to the Government. I believe it has embarrassed this question more than anything else, that the British and Foreign School Society do take the paltry sum of £750 a-year [cheers].

Mr. T. BINNEY (minister) having been loudly called for, rose and said: I did think, in looking at the resolution, that it had been drawn up in good faith, and in kind and brotherly feeling; but I am deceived. In good faith, inasmuch as I understood this to be a conference of the opponents of the measure, and that gentlemen opposed to it on any principle might be here. I thought that the resolution had been drawn up in brotherly feeling, so that any one opposed to the measure might unite in its expression. Every one, however, who does not go the whole length has been put down by my friend Dr. Hamilton. When I read the resolution I thought I could concur in it in my own sense; but I considered it in two respects. I thought it was confined to the experiment of the thing in this

country; and I considered that the words, "Not within the province of the Government to educate the people," covered that wide ground. I do not think that it is the province or the duty of the Government to educate the people. I think their primary duty is, by wise regulations, to place the people in such a condition that they can educate themselves [cheers]. But I believe that the duty of the Government may be modified by the circumstances of the people, their condition, and so on, and therefore I believe that it might be patriotic for them to aid and assist in the education of the people [cries of "hear, hear," and some signs of disapprobation]. I thought that this was to be a Conference. It is of no use to lay down abstract principles, but we must look at the working of a thing and come to a conclusion by experience. That is the principle of all political philosophy. I am afraid that the other is so working that it will come to be questionable, whether the Government can even aid education. In waiting upon Lord John Russell, as one of a deputation, I told his Lordship that I objected to the centralizing character of the measure, that I should prefer educational districts, and that I should like to see the municipal principle, which is that of self-government [hear, hear]. His Lordship acknowledged that abstractedly that was the best; that it was the principle acted upon in the United States, but there education was compulsory. I stated that I was not one of those who took the abstract ground of Government not being able to do anything; that I should have no objection to see a million of money spent constitutionally and well in education, because we should save it in other ways, and, therefore, a wise compulsory law would not be objectionable to me on the principle of municipal self-government. The principle taken up by Mr. Stovel and by this religious nation is, that you cannot consent to secular education without its being mixed up day by day with religion. I believe that man is specifically and essentially distinguished by the religious capacity; and, I think, that to give education without the development of the religious capacity is absurd [hear, hear]. Education is the development of the whole of man—the development of the religious capacity pre-eminently, for it is that which makes man what he is; but I can conceive that secular instruction and religious education are two very different things [cries of "No, no"]. I can conceive that the office of secular instruction might be undertaken by any well-qualified citizen; but religious education is the solemn obligation of the parent and the church to which the parent belongs. I do not see that it might not be possible to separate the two functions, and that Government might greatly assist the secular instruction of the people. I hold that a well regulated and thoroughly sound secular education, in connexion, especially, with a school literature like ours, would have a tendency to strengthen the faculties, and call forth the moral sentiments, while the religious education given by the parent and the Church would, under the blessing of God, make the children virtuous members of society—saints and servants of God [cheers]. The Government have wished to try this over and over again, but neither Churchmen nor Dissenters would allow it. I stated to Lord John Russell that we ought to have a national education of that character that neither priest nor presbyter should enter the school; but that cannot be. The next best thing would be for Government to say, Let any number of persons have their schools, and conduct their own religious education, but we will teach nothing but secular instruction. I further stated to Lord John Russell, that we had a very strong objection to that part of the Minutes which, in consequence of there being but one school in a locality, would render it necessary that the Church Catechism should be taught in it. I pointed out to him that the child of the Dissenter must either go without the secular advantage of the school, or obtain it at the price of religious apostasy, and that he would be compelled to attend the Church Sunday-school [cheers]. He admitted that it was a manifest hardship and wrong, but added, "You know we did not make the latter rule [loud cries of 'Hear, hear']". The schools make these regulations for themselves. I replied that, in schools supported by voluntary funds, they might make what regulations they pleased; but that, if Government supported schools, they were bound to watch over the interests and rights of that community, whose money they dispensed [loud cheers]. I added that there ought to be a regulation made that the child of the Dissenter should not be obliged to learn the Church Catechism, or attend the Established Church; for it was not wrong to tell the Churchman that he was not to teach, but it was a manifest wrong for the Dissenting child to be compelled to learn [cheers]. The great error in this country is, that the Government are called to act through the religious bodies. With the beautiful appearance of equity, the Government plan becomes the most inequitable thing in the world. If it were possible for Government to know nothing about religious bodies, and the municipal principle could be acted upon, you would get equity; but having to seek the education of the people through the religious bodies, it comes to this, that in the distribution of money the rich get it through their riches, and the poor lose it through their poverty [cheers].

Mr. E. MIALI said: I think my friend Mr. Binney will withdraw the remark with which he commenced his observations and arguments, and will admit, that this is a Conference which allows of every man speaking distinctly and fairly his own mind. I know very little of the worth of a Conference in which resolutions are to be drawn up necessarily suited to the pre-conceived ideas of every one who may come to it; and I do believe that we ought, at all events amongst us Dissenters, just to come to that manly state of mind in which we can bear honestly to express the opinions of the majority. I would not, in the slightest degree, interfere with the fullest discussion, but court it. I would express the principle I wished to express as perfectly as I could, that it might be intelligible to those who are without; and I would have it placed before the meeting, to be fairly entered into on both sides, the vote indicating merely what is the prevailing sentiment of the meeting. I see nothing discourteous in this—nothing wrong; and, as a member of the

Committee, I would vindicate them of any, perhaps not intended, aspersion upon their character for sincerity when they called the meeting together, as a meeting of the opponents of the Government scheme, and in drawing up a resolution going into the very pith of the principle. Now, I believe that Mr. Binney, in his own forcible way, has put before you one or two principles which, in their operation on society, are doing more harm to all the movements of society towards a fuller development than any other principles whatever. I believe that those who cast contempt on abstract principles positively cast contempt, without intending it, upon the Gospel. I believe God's method of affecting the mind, and through the mind the character and conduct, is just the present abstract principle; and I feel perfectly persuaded, that until we get rid of the idea that things are practically to work themselves out, instead of our working them out by the constant operation of the mind [applause]—until we get rid of the idea that circumstances are to govern us, and that we are unable to govern circumstances, we shall never get much further forward in the course to which we aspire. The question, I take it, which is now before you, is one of immense importance, properly decided, and decided upon proper principles,—it seems to me to be the key of almost every question of politics and social philosophy which can be presented for examination. I believe that the question has almost always been brought before you in a wrong shape. Here is an actual, outward, positive necessity existing, and the existence of this actual necessity is thrust upon us for the first time; and we are told that the mere existence of that necessity is a sufficient reason for the Government's undertaking the education of the people,—the supply of the necessity. No, I believe, that whatever Government does, the *onus probandi* is upon the Government to show, first, that it ought to do; secondly, that it can do; and that every new sphere upon which it enters ought to be guarded by every patriotic—nay, by every philosophic—man standing up and saying, "Prove your right to enter here before you have our consent" [hear]. Government has usually undertaken the thing, and the myrmidons of Government, whether in the pulpit or the press, have told us to show that it is not the right of Government thus to interfere. I believe that the mode of presenting the argument is a perfectly gratuitous and unsound one; and, consequently, I should feel that I stood upon strong ground if I merely took my stand upon a negative, and were to say to Mr. Binney, "You may conceive of ten thousand ways in which the Government might interfere, and interfere with effect, for the instruction of the masses; but if Government is to take this matter in hand, before I grant you a single step in advance, be pleased to do something more than present a conception of your own—beautiful though it may be." Give me the argument why I should allow Government to enter upon this matter [applause]. I look upon it—to take up rather the positive argument against it—I look upon it as utterly unphilosophical in the first place. If ever I were to meet with those who urge the interference of Government in a matter of this nature, I feel they are instantly nonplussed by merely asking them this question, "Pray, how do you define a Government, and what are its objects?" They may answer, as it has been frequently answered, that it is an organ for the development of the resources and the character of the State. But now that is perfectly gratuitous; that is what one man may say. Show me any philosophy in that any more than if I were to say, Government is an organ for doing anything which the mind of man can conceive. There must be, then, since Government is in essence an ordinance of Divine Providence, some object which Government necessarily tends to, for which it is adapted, and that object must be found in its own nature; and if a man philosophizes let him take that very nature of Government, let him feel it is by Divine Providence, and out of that nature, not out of his imagination—[cheers, in which the conclusion of the sentence was lost]. I say the necessity for Government limits the scope in which Government should act. Providence has given us this machinery in order to meet a certain want, and the machinery is evidently to be bounded in its operations by the want which demands its existence. The whole plan of Government is just this—to render society amongst men a possible thing; and to render society possible, it is necessary that the administration of justice should be, not in private hands, but in the hands of the public; that we should have a defence against the trespasses of each other, whether they be individual or collective. Now here, I think, I find in the very nature of Government its own object, and in the object the limitation of its operations. I would just point for one moment, and only a moment, to the immense importance of keeping within this proper sphere. I do not care what the form of Government is, though it were the most perfect autocracy on the face of the earth—and under some circumstances it must be more conducive to the liberties of the people—I do not care much about the form of Government, but only that the operations of Government be kept within its proper mark. Very nearly all the bloodshed, the insurrections, the State-crimes which stain the annals of history, may be traced not so much to the imperfect formation of Government machinery as to the misapplication of the machinery to the objects for which it was never intended. I say, it is important above all things that we stay upon the threshold. I rejoice—though I would not in any way exult, I rejoice in this respect—I, at least, have nothing to confess. I cannot say that I was ever a party to the mistakes that have been made by some of our Dissenting friends with their too charitable interpretations of the intentions of Government. I have not gone with them; but from the first, as far as my influence could extend, I have always protested against the danger of permitting Government to meddle with the people's mind. I have done so in a minority, and in a minority of one's own friends; and I do now most cordially and delightedly hail the conversion of those who, by the outward working of things, have had lessons practically presented to their minds, perhaps more impressively than could have been done by a mere abstract principle. I would only, just before

I part from this point, warn them, that, inasmuch as they have found the value, the importance of coming to a right principle, and of never suffering a principle to be frittered away in the hope that some practical benefit, without the evil, may come out of it,—since they have had such a warning, as they confessedly have, and that warning now, in the shape of these Minutes, stares them in the face [hear]—I would only just gently admonish those friends to beware how, lest some few years hence it may possibly be that they may have to make another confession—a confession that they did not sufficiently take up their stand upon a principle of even greater importance than this; and that had they foreseen, or been able for a moment to anticipate what course the outward events of Providence would have taken, they would have felt themselves under the strongest necessity to take their principles, though they took them alone, and carry them with them through every walk of life [loud cheers]. I see that the whole thing is not only unphilosophical, but, in my opinion, it is perfectly unjust, though the State should never meddle with religion—unjust, though they should not even meddle with one's political opinions—perfectly unjust in essence, as it appears to me, to take the money of the whole community and make it reproductive of the mind of only a majority. They talk about the perfect fairness and freedom of this system in America—why America, through the medium of her State-schools, is just reproducing in every generation her prejudice and her mistakes. The tyranny of a King we would guard against transmitting from one generation to another; but why should we not equally guard against the tyranny of a majority? Democracy is doing just what democracy can in America with education, as an instrument of its will. It is nothing to the argument whether the opinions of America be right or wrong, sound or unsound. The real argument is, that America is able to reproduce herself in the minds of her posterity, through the medium of her State schools; and the power is perfectly unjust,—ought to be possessed by no individual,—of taking my money, who am a member of a ridiculous minority, and transmitting the ideas of the majority, through the means of my money, to those at their command. I stand up not only for my own chance, but for the truth. I hold that truth is as much a part of me, as any property I possess. No man has a right to put me at a disadvantage with regard to that truth; no man has a right to lay claim to public resources, in order that he may come across my path in my attempt to propagate truth. Give truth fair play, and it would be utterly impossible, in my opinion, to tolerate any national establishment of schools, whatever might be the form that national establishment might assume. Then I consider it thoroughly inexpedient. It seems contrary to God's method of improving and expanding society in the world; it is endeavouring to precipitate all the troubled elements of society by a sort of hydraulic pressure, instead of leaving them to work according to the providential course which God has impressed upon the elements of this world. I do not

all, the regeneration of nations depends much on the interference of Government. My opinion is, that Christianity has come simply with a view to put down depravity and ignorance; and I know if Christianity only have fair play, Christianity will do it. Has it not all the capability to do it, and do it successfully? And those persons who are so impatient because the fruit—as not come to its maturity in the season of bleak April, I would bid just wait a little while, and see what Christianity will do unfettered—entirely unfettered by State influence [loud cheers]. Do not make any of those rash experiments with this delicate instrumentality. Wait and see what it will produce. Is it not the duty of the church—I speak of the church in its proper sense—to educate the people and attend to their minds, and to bring those minds into conformity to God? I say it is just simply because the aristocracy of this country, mainly, have neglected their duty in the promulgation of truth, and in the sustentation of educational institutions, that we are now called upon for Government interference [applause]. If they had done anything like their duty, there would have been not the slightest necessity for the interposition of Government [applause]. But, after all, what have we done ourselves? We may boast as we will of our educational institutions, and, undoubtedly, they are large and creditable to us; but, hitherto, I do not believe there are many of the Dissenters that have sacrificed the comfort of their own desires in order to give instruction to the poor. I believe we are perfectly able to do that which it is our duty to do. And when the politicians come to us and say, "Are you able to take into your hands the education of the whole population?" the reply is perfectly easy, "Why should I undertake it? Why do you not undertake it? You have got that duty as well as myself!" These men in high places look down upon us, and ask us with contempt, "Can you undertake the education of the whole people?" We will undertake more than they do,—that is, to do our part [cheers]—and I believe, if we were to undertake to do our part, it would infuse a spirit of rivalry into the bosom of the opposite system, that would go far to shame them into a rejection of the principles they are now adopting. I care not at all for the putting forward of the Minutes. I believe that much good may come out, not merely of the Minutes themselves, but of the discussion of the abstract principle which these Minutes have necessitated; and if there be any one result produced by this Conference, I shall be satisfied with that result, which consists in the courteous kindly collision of free thoughts upon a subject, perhaps, vaster in its importance than almost any that can be brought to the contemplation of the mind [loud cheers].

The resolution was then carried amidst long continued cheers.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I am requested to state that Mr. George William Harrison, one of the leading Wesleyans of Wakefield, is here as a deputation from that town, and that he has come chiefly with a view of protesting against the decision of the United Committees of Manchester, and at the same time of stating that probably that decision was not final [cheers].

Mr. G. W. HARRISON said: I have, for several years,

felt a deep and lively interest in the question of education, and I have now an important statement to make in reference to the body with which I am associated. The resolution which has just been brought forward speaks of "the importance of protesting against the decision of the United Committees at Manchester." I am very happy to tell you that no final decision has yet been come to [cheers]. In my own neighbourhood I use what little influence I possess to oppose the Government scheme. On the 30th of last month a meeting was held in the court-house, and resolutions were passed, equally strong with your own, in condemnation of the measure, and with all but complete unanimity on the part of those assembled. The petitions founded on those resolutions I had the pleasure of forwarding to the members for Wakefield; and I also requested Mr. E. B. Denison and Lord Morpeth to support their prayer. In the letters which I took the liberty of sending to these gentlemen, I said that I looked upon education on the part of the Government as unjust to those bodies who could not receive it, as impracticable in relation to the effect intended, and especially as being calculated, if carried out at all, to produce a degrading effect upon the public mind. In reference to the body of Christians with which I am more immediately associated—the Wesleyan body—and to the circumstances which have brought me here to-day, I wish to make one or two observations. Until the meeting at Manchester, on Friday last, I entertained confident hopes that the Wesleyans, as a body, would offer a most decided opposition in reference to this question; but I have since ascertained that the alterations which have had the effect of making almost a new arrangement, have been tendered to that body by the Government. If this were a political occasion, I should express my feelings in reference to the character of any Government who could be capable of taking any such course; and, if I live until the next election, I will certainly take the liberty of expressing my feelings as to the conduct of that Government—respectable as I admit that its members are in their private capacity—who can privately communicate with any body on a great national question like this [hear, hear]. When I heard, yesterday, in Leeds, a rumour that the Wesleyan Committees had come to a decision in favour of the altered Minutes with a minority of only five, I must own that my spirit was very much stirred within me at such an announcement; and I determined at once to come to London in order to ascertain the truth. I have this morning paid a visit to several of the leading members of our communion, and though I must not mention their names, I may be permitted to say that I find from their statements that no decision has yet been come to by the United Committees in reference to this measure, and that there are objections still remaining which are not likely to be surmounted [cheers]. I do not see how it is possible for the Government and these Committees to come to any terms of agreement which will enable the Committees to go so far as to give their sanction to the measure. To this I may add, that I have it from the highest authority that such an idea as that of the Committees agreeing to accept the Government grants has never been mentioned, and never entered their heads [hear, hear]. All that the Committees consider themselves entitled to do does not extend so far as this. I have here the minutes of the last Conference, and I find that this question is asked, "Who are the Committee for guarding our privileges during the ensuing year?" And I find that they speak of "the Committee." I need not say that there is a material difference between guarding privileges and trying to make a bargain with the Government. But I do not fear that there is any probability of such a thing as that which I have mentioned happening at present. I do not know what may arise hereafter [hear, hear]. Other interviews are to be held, and the Committee will meet again on Friday next; but I believe it is not at all likely, that in acting on behalf of the Wesleyan body they will put themselves in the awful position of agreeing to give their sanction to the Government measure. I sincerely hope that I may prove to be right in that opinion. But I am certainly right in saying, that there is no intention on their part of making any kind of agreement as to taking the public money; and I feel amply repaid for my journey, by having ascertained that single fact [hear, hear]. Supposing such an evil to arise, I believe that in the neighbourhood in which I live, such a feeling would be created as has never been seen in the church with which I am connected; and such a feeling as I believe will never arise in that church, for I hope that we shall not be so left without the guidance of a higher power as to be placed in that dilemma [cheers]. As a Wesleyan, I have no hesitation in saying, that if the United Committees had entered into any kind of agreement with the Government, for taking the public money, they would have betrayed their trust and betrayed the interests of those who had placed them in power [cheers]. As to the Committees keeping our body so long from acting unitedly, let me say, I heartily disapprove of it [cheers]. Our body generally disapprove of it, and I believe that it will lead to various changes and alterations, and I may say, with the gentleman who preceded me, that great good may thus in the end arise out of evil [much laughter]. Had a different course been taken, I believe we should have had congregational petitions from every part of the kingdom against the Government measure, and I may take the liberty of saying, that I believe we shall still have such petitions, if time be only given for that purpose. I would also remark that since the holding of the interviews between the Government and the United Committees of the Wesleyan body, has deprived us of that united action which would otherwise have taken place, it is only fair that time should now be given to see whether any steps will be taken in reference to this important matter [hear, hear]. As regards the general effect of such a measure on education, I believe that nothing could produce a more paralyzing result in reference to the efforts of private individuals than any kind of Government help [hear, hear]. For the last few years I have felt a deep interest in connexion with the body to which I belong, in the schools which are established in our town. We have there

raised two thousand guineas for the establishment of schools, and I am perfectly satisfied that if the Government had given us £600, we should never have got anything beyond that sum [hear, hear]. The energies of the people would have been paralyzed by the Government assistance. And this, I think, is quite sufficient to set at rest that part of the question which relates to expediency. I am happy to say that I have already got quite as far as the gentleman who last spoke. I agree to the fullest extent with everything that can be said in favour of the separation of Church and State. I have been in court about six years on the question of church-rates: if necessary I will go there again [cheers]. In reference, therefore, to the principle of the thing, I stand on a solid rock and there is no other solid rock than that of each man doing his duty to God and his country according to scriptural rules [hear, hear]. It is my firm belief that by the use of proper exertions in opposing this measure it may yet be averted [cheers].

The CHAIRMAN here intimated, that the Finance Committee had reported that £200 would yet be required to defray the expenses connected with the Conference, and said he hoped that the gentlemen assembled would see the propriety of aiding the committee in a pecuniary point of view.

Mr. ROWLAND, of Liverpool, said: I am sorry to say anything to damp the feelings of the gentleman who has just spoken, but I have had a statement, on authority which I cannot question, that the committee at Manchester did, on Friday last, come to the decision that they would not recommend the Wesleyan body to offer any opposition to the measure.

Mr. HARRISON said, that a meeting was held in London for several hours on the previous day, which had been adjourned from Manchester. An interview was to be held with the Marquis of Lansdowne on that day, and another adjourned meeting was to take place on Friday. In a letter which he had received from a person who was present, it was distinctly said that no decision had been come to.

Mr. BIRNEY said it did not appear to him to be of very much importance what had been determined upon if the Government had declared that a poor Catholic child should be denied secular education. It was impossible to conceive anything that would do more good to the cause which they were assembled to promote.

The Secretary, Mr. LEEHAN, said: I will state to the meeting all the information which I possess on this subject, and I will give the name of the party from whom that information comes. I derived it yesterday from Mr. John Howard, of Leeds, one of the gentlemen who attended the meeting at Manchester, held on Friday. He stated to me that a decision had been come to by the gentlemen assembled there not to interfere in opposition to the measure. He further stated to me the terms of the compromise which had been made with the Government. Those terms were the following:—First, that the authorized version of the Scriptures should be enforced in all the schools, and that the gentlemen present supposed that they had, at all events, secured the exclusion of the Roman Catholics. It was added, however, that some modification was annexed to the proposition on the part of the Government, to enable them at some future time to make their own arrangements. Thirdly, the Wesleyans themselves were to be consulted as to the appointment of any inspector who might visit their schools; and, fourthly, it was stated that the idea entertained by the Bishop of Exeter, as to the ordination of any of the schoolmasters, was utterly fallacious, and that the Government had given their assurance that it should not take place. I have given you the name of my informant—Mr. Howard—who is one of the most influential of the provincial Wesleyans, and he has stated to me that those are the terms upon which the party assembled at Manchester would consent to recommend the Wesleyan body to offer no opposition. I think it right to make this announcement, in order that the Wesleyans may not permit themselves to be lulled into inactivity at a moment like the present, but may come forward as an independent body, and at once proceed to petition the Legislature in opposition to the measure, and to show that the Wesleyans, as a body, do not coincide in what has been done.

Mr. RYLAND said that he had listened with an almost unbounded admiration to the language of Mr. Miall; but though standing in a smaller minority than that gentleman, he would take the liberty of saying, that if the proposition had gone forth for even the imposition of the cross at baptism, his own body (the Unitarian), to a man—to the ten-thousandth part of a man—would have appeared before Lord John Russell to-morrow, representing the united counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, like St. Paul on his way to Jerusalem and Damascus, in order to protest against any such proceedings.

Mr. BAINES said: I wish to say one or two words on this subject. I think, with one of the gentlemen who preceded me, that if the Government have had this negotiation—this private negotiation, such as has been proceeding between the Committee of Privy Council and the committees of the Wesleyan body—for the purpose of leading the latter to believe that the Roman Catholics should be excluded from the benefit of the Government grant—while, on the other hand, the Roman Catholics are led to believe that they shall be admitted to the benefit—I do think that it will be a stain and a stigma on the men and the measure which will utterly ruin both of them [loud cheers]. I cannot conceive any honest man in Parliament supporting a Government capable of such conduct as that—capable of leading the Roman Catholics to believe that they shall be admitted to the benefits of this grant; and, at the same time, tampering with the Wesleyan Committees, and sending Lord Ashley to tell them that the Roman Catholics shall be excluded. There is very grave reason to believe, that there has been some under-hand work, but I cannot think that the Ministers of the Crown have been parties to it. I must believe that it has been the act of subordinates—that it is the dictatorial board, the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, who have been carrying on this disreputable proceeding. I have in my hand a letter from a Member of Parliament, written yesterday, in which he says, "The Downing-

street and Lambeth cads are beginning to tell the Dissenting interest to be quiet, wait for fresh minutes, let us get the Church into a trap and then you shall see what we shall do for you: ditto to the Roman Catholics." And this gentleman well adds, "Was there ever anything so dishonest?" [hear, hear.] That is a letter from a Member of Parliament in our own interest. From what has appeared in the *Record* and *Watchman*, I cannot but believe that the parties whom they represent have been led thus to understand the measure. The rule laid down by Paley is, that the meaning of anything to be judged by the effect produced on the mind of the party to whom it is addressed. Now, the interpretation which has been put upon it by the quarters to which I have just referred, is, that the Roman Catholics are to be excluded, while the Roman Catholics, on the other hand, are led to believe that when the measure has been passed they will be admitted by means of some fresh minutes. I say, that is a course so disgraceful, that if it comes out in the face of Parliament I believe it will explode the ministry. One word more. I have reason to know that there are many noble-minded men, like Mr. Harrison, in the Wesleyan denomination, who are opposed to this measure. And that in Yorkshire their stability will be endangered if it should be found that the Committees have been capable of carrying on an under-hand transaction like that which has been mentioned. I do hope, for the sake of the country, and for the sake of truth and honour, it will be found that they have not done all that has been stated.

Mr. BINNEY said, in the interview which we had with Lord John Russell, I said to his lordship, "We have great objections to the principle of introducing, by a sort of back-door, so great a national measure as this. Such a course is unconstitutional." His lordship replied: "I do not think it will ever come to more than £150,000." I rejoined: "My lord, if you conceive that it will never rise beyond that, you can, after all, have no idea that the measure will effect anything worth having, the system must cost ten times that amount, to be worth anything." The inference I draw from his lordship's observation was, that he felt that, if the amount became very large, the thing would be unconstitutional. In reply to another remark which I made, his lordship said, "Why, you know, we might introduce a minute to meet that difficulty." I replied, "My lord, that is one of the things which we most dread; we fear that, instead of having everything fixed and decided, we shall be exposed every moment to an unauthorized minute, and find alterations and amendments introduced which were never contemplated."

Mr. W. WHITE, of Bedford, moved the following resolution:—

3. "That the scheme being thus vicious and injurious as an educational measure in the opinion of this conference, there is nothing to break the force of those strong collateral objections to which it is liable; first, as having been brought forward, not in the constitutional form of a bill to be discussed in both Houses of Parliament, but as minutes of a committee of the Executive; secondly, as involving in the issue a large and unprofitable expenditure of the public money; and thirdly, as creating an influence on the part of the Government over the popular masses, which may at any time be employed for objects politically corrupt, and can scarcely exist for any considerable period without exercising an influence unfavourable to the national character."

In doing so, he said he could never believe that Lord John Russell would be guilty of any such conduct as had been imputed to him. He had the highest respect for the personal honour of that nobleman, and he did not believe that he would falsify all the professions which he had hitherto made. Let them look at the position in which Lord John Russell was placing himself by doing what had been imputed to him. The Whigs went out of office repeatedly because they would pass Catholic emancipation. They forfeited their political position on that measure; they postponed their advent to power because they wished to carry it; and now he (Mr. White) was asked to believe, on the evidence of statements of a very vague character, that the Whigs were about to pass an act to perpetuate or restore Catholic disabilities. He did not believe for a moment that the Whigs were capable of taking any such course. Now, putting away all circumlocution, in this case, the plain meaning of the resolution which had been proposed was, that they should not at the coming election vote for any man who had supported this measure, and that, when they returned to their different towns, they should use all the influence which they possessed to secure a candidate who was opposed to such a grant; and if they could not secure such a candidate, that they should stand aloof in order to wash their hands of all such proceedings [hear, hear]. Perhaps such a resolution involved more than appeared on the face of it. He knew what it was to stand aloof in a borough. For twenty years he had been a shopkeeper in a borough town, and some of the gentlemen present, who were independent of those influences which were brought to bear on the shopkeepers, might find it a very easy task to vote such a resolution and to act upon it. They must, however, know that a person in the situation of a shopkeeper, if he intends to act in such a manner, must be prepared to make a great sacrifice for conscience. It was a most expensive thing to persons who, situated as he had been for a period of twenty years, to act according to his conscience, and to avoid giving offence towards God and man. He had no hesitation in saying, that a man in a borough town, a fool, a Tory, and a Churchman had a better chance than the cleverest man who ever stood on two legs, if he were a Radical and a Dissenter.

Mr. J. CHAPLIN, of Colchester, seconded the resolution, and said that he regarded it as one of the most important resolutions that had been brought forward. He considered that without some such step all the other resolutions which had been proposed would be utterly useless.

Mr. TILLET, of Norwich, said—He had come from that city almost exclusively for the purpose of supporting a resolution like that which had been proposed. He had been for some years an active supporter of the Liberal party, and he was a Liberal member of the town council of Norwich, but he was prepared to break off all the associations of his past life, in order to carry out this resolution. And there were hundreds of persons in Norwich who entertained similar feelings.

After a desultory discussion the resolution was adopted.

Several gentleman having been appointed to conduct a Conference with members of Parliament at Brown's hotel, the Conference adjourned.—[A brief report of this meeting will be found below].

THIRD DAY.

Thursday, April 15.

The Conference resumed its sittings at ten o'clock on Thursday morning.

The CHAIRMAN having briefly opened the proceedings,

Mr. HINTON read the following note from the Marquis of Lansdowne:—

Lord Lansdowne presents his compliments to Mr. Hinton, and has just received his note upon arriving in town. He has appointed to see the deputation from Leicestershire tomorrow, at one o'clock, at his house in Berkeley-square, and will be glad to see Mr. Hinton and the gentlemen in whose name he writes, if they can make it convenient to call at the same time.

It was intended, therefore, to propose that a deputation from the Conference should be appointed to wait upon the Marquis of Lansdowne at 1 o'clock that day.

Dr. VAUGHAN wished to make one or two remarks on what he might call a question of privilege. Some observations with reference to himself had been made on the previous day, when he was about to retire from the meeting. All that he had to say, in order to prevent misconception relative to his position, was just this. It had been all along his conviction that the strong and the most fitting ground for them to take with regard to this measure was the religious ground. To that opinion he had adhered from the first. He thought they would all have been in a more effective position if they could have felt that that ground was the best that could be taken; not that they should, on that account, be understood as standing committed to all that might be proposed of a general or secular nature, but as being opposed to what was of a religious nature, as religious men, pastors, and delegates of churches. If the question afterwards came before them in its general bearing, they might then deal with it as citizens.

Mr. STOVEL said that, in referring to Dr. Vaughan's letter in the *Morning Chronicle*, he had not been influenced by any personal feeling, nor did he intend to make any personal reflection [hear, hear]. It was unfortunate, certainly, that Dr. Vaughan was not present; but he still felt it incumbent on him to say that he thought nothing but an extreme case would induce anyone to take an independent movement which would break their front [hear]. He felt persuaded, as the result of what he had witnessed yesterday evening, that if the Dissenters failed in their object it would only be because, when confronting those with whom they had to contend, they did not seem to have agreed among themselves [hear, hear].

Dr. VAUGHAN could not understand why the columns of a newspaper should be open to one side and not to the other.

Mr. STOVEL said, what he objected to was Dr. Vaughan's stating what in a given case would be the conduct of Dissenters,—a question which was under the consideration of their Conference [hear, hear].

Dr. VAUGHAN demurred to the view taken, but would refrain from making any further remarks on the subject.

The conversation then dropped.

Mr. E. DAWSON proposed the following resolution:—

That it is the solemn conviction of this Conference, that the circumstances of the times render it the bounden duty of all who value their civil and religious liberties as their best political birthright, and who justly regard with alarm the system of voting public money in aid of ecclesiastical purposes, as tending to establish an illicit and corrupting connexion between the Government and the teachers of religion, detrimental alike to the freedom of opinion and to the interests of truth, to make it a condition of giving their support to any Parliamentary candidate, that he will oppose all further grants of public money for such purposes.

He said he was delighted to see that the Conference was determined to oppose all State interference in the matter of education [cheers]. He regretted that there was no delegation from the British and Foreign School Society, for he had hoped that that Society had wiped away the disgrace brought upon them by accepting aid from Government. Still, a meeting was about to be called to consider the question. As regarded the resolution, he trusted that the principle of it would be better carried out than it had been in the case of Mr. Miall.

Mr. S. MORLEY seconded the resolution. He entirely coincided in the principle of the resolution, and he thought that Lord John Russell himself should not be replaced in his present position on account of the unsoundness of his views on this subject. In reference to the general question, he thought that Dissenters ought to make a great effort to improve the quality of the education given by them, which was in many cases very defective [hear, hear]. They must not keep their money in their pocket if they pretended to feel interested in the cause of education.

Mr. SEWELL, of London, considered that this resolution would, if properly carried out, have a greater effect than all the others. He knew that it had been communicated to the treasury, by persons about to contest boroughs or liberal principles, that without the support of Dissenters it would be impossible for them to succeed [hear, hear]. Rather than this measure should be carried, he would have no objection to see the next House of Commons without a single Whig member in it. He called upon all present to carry out this resolution in the most practical manner when the sittings of the Conference had closed.

Mr. J. WEBB, minister, of Ipswich, thought the Dissenters had hitherto erred in being too grateful to the Whigs [hear, hear]. By the confidence which they had reposed in the Whig leaders they had been led into a trap; and he trusted that none of them would any longer be willing to continue in political servitude [cheers]. It was necessary to read a lesson to the Whigs at the hustings. A number of persons in his own neighbourhood had signed a declaration that they would not vote for or recommend any candidate who was in favour of any kind of religious endowment; and he hoped that the example would be extensively imitated. The period had come when as Englishmen and as Dissenters it became them to take a more de-

cided position, and to show to this great nation that they were determined that no efforts should be made to destroy their liberties which should not be met with corresponding opposition.

Dr. PRICE also supported the resolution. Dissenters were now freed from political ties, and the time was a fitting one for them to take up a proper and consistent position. He was rejoiced that Manchester, at least, was about to return a representative who would thoroughly represent their principles in the House of Commons—a House which was not, by any means remarkable for the integrity or fidelity of its members [hear, hear]. He was ashamed of many legislators who had been put forward as the representatives of their views. They wanted men who would form a nucleus of Dissent in the legislature; and when he looked at the chair, and saw by whom it was filled, he could not think there would be any difficulty in finding proper persons to represent their real principles. It was their duty to secure the return of, at least, half a dozen or a dozen men, who should be competent to declare what they were, what they believed, and what they purposed [cheers].

The discussion of the resolution was then interrupted for a few minutes, while the meeting appointed the following gentlemen as a deputation to meet the Marquis of Lansdowne:—

Mr. Thomson, Chairman of the Conference; Dr. Hamilton, of Leeds; Mr. E. Baines, Mr. Dawson, of Lancaster; Mr. J. Sturge, of Birmingham; Mr. James Kershaw, of Manchester; Rev. R. Ryland, of Bradford; Rev. T. N. Goultry, of Brighton; Mr. S. Morley, of London; Dr. Godwin, of Bradford; Mr. Ackroyd, of Otley; Mr. May, of Ipswich; Mr. Tillett, of Norwich; Rev. T. Davids, of Colchester; Rev. T. Porter, of Darwen; Rev. Mr. Barfit, of Grantham; Rev. H. Richards, of London; and Rev. J. H. Hinton, of London.

During Mr. Kershaw's absence, the chair was occupied by Dr. Price.

The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were any gentlemen present who differed from the mover, seconder, and supporters of the resolution, that was the proper period for their coming forward to express their dissent.

Mr. J. A. TABOR, of Colchester, said the resolution did not appear to him to go far enough [hear, hear]. How was it that an unimportant individual had been able to propound such a proposition? It was simply because he was a Churchman. How was it that the Privy Council could consent to remove the measure so propounded? Simply, because he was a Churchman. How was it that the Queen could give her assent to such a measure? Simply, because she belonged to the Church; and the members of the Government and of the Legislature suffered the scheme for the same reason [hear, hear]. It was impossible to have a proper representation of their principles in Parliament under the present system; and he would suggest that, in order to secure that object, a fund should be raised to secure the return of Nonconformist Ministers.

The resolution was then put from the chair, and carried unanimously.

Mr. J. RUTTER, of Shaftesbury, proposed the following resolution:—

That, seeing how imperfectly the principles of Protestant Dissenters are understood in Parliament, even by those to whose efforts they have been indebted for the redress of their partial grievances, and how liable they are to the introduction of measures in which those principles are utterly disregarded and set at naught, this Conference cannot separate without earnestly recommending to Liberal electors the adoption of well-considered means of securing the return to the House of Commons of such candidates as not merely profess to hold sacred the claims of religious liberty, but also clearly understand what those claims imply.

He feared that whatever might be the case in boroughs it would be quite impossible to carry out the resolution in the agricultural districts. There, the electors were slaves to those who were the great owners of property in the neighbourhood. To secure the attainment of their object in such districts it would be necessary to have a second reformation [hear, hear]. Perhaps they were losing time even by the course they were then pursuing. They should rather lay the axe to the root of the evil, viz., the connexion between Church and State [cheers]. He felt that they were not so much indebted to Mr. Baines, Mr. Miall, or even to Sir James Graham, as they were to Lord Lansdowne, Lord Russell and Sir G. Grey, for teaching them the necessity of carrying out their principles in a more effective manner [hear, hear]. If the child was to be compelled to receive education, what would there be to prevent the application of the same principle in the case of parents.

Mr. F. WHEELER, of Rochester, in seconding the resolution, expressed his deep anxiety that none present should lose sight of the first great principle to which attention had been devoted, that man had a right to dictate to man in matters of religion. That principle was one prodigious lie [hear, hear], and it became them to protest against it.

Mr. LEASK, of Dover, believed that the carrying out of such resolutions as that before the meeting would do more good than even the defeating of the measure. That measure he opposed because it applied the influence of a Government in a region to which such influence did not extend. The *Daily News* had that morning repeated its charge that the Dissenters were a parcel of men who were in favour of ignorance. Their whole history gave the lie to that statement, and there he would leave the matter [cheers]. As long as they took up only a middle kind of ground they would be subjected to periodical visitations of such measures as that under consideration.

Mr. COCKIN said it had been remarked by Mr. Wilberforce, in speaking on the slave question, that the most dangerous men to a cause were the moderate men. He believed that that held good of their own cause [hear, hear]. They were told that some of the moderate men, in this case, were respectable men. So much the worse for the Dissenters [laughter]. If Dr. Priestley had not been a respectable man, he could not have done so much mischief. However respectable the moderate men on the present question might be, he feared that it was they who would do the greatest injury.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

Mr. J. SCOBELL could say with Mr. Miall, that he had no confessions of error to make on this subject. He had always held that it was the duty of every citizen to see that no union existed between the Church and the

State [cheers]. The resolution which he had to move was as follows:—

That this Conference is constrained to regard the Minutes developed in the Committee of Council with the greater jealousy, in consequence of the system of education recommended by her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, to be carried into effect therein, which being generally identical in its principles with that embodied in the Minutes of Council, proceeds to sanction the imposition of a direct tax on the parents of the children to be educated, and the enactment of a law to constrain them, under penalties to be enforced by the magistrate, to send their children to school.

He could not help remarking, that, in attending to home duties they ought not to forget their brethren in the colonies. If proper attention had been paid to colonial affairs it would have been impossible that past events should have occurred. In the crown colonies the Colonial-Secretary of the day had despotic power; and it appeared, from the despatches of Lord Grey, that there was a disposition on his part, to issue commands in reference to education. His Lordship had expressed himself in favour of having the children constrained to attend school, and of inflicting a penalty on the parents in case the regulation should not be complied with. He hoped there would be an earnest endeavour to prevent such a nefarious intention from being carried out.

Dr. MASSIE, in seconding the resolution, said he was much afraid that Lord Grey was but carrying out, to its legitimate issue, a national education of the people [hear, hear]. Unless the children of poor persons were forced to attend the school, he did not see what practical advantage could result from the measure. As a wise statesman, Lord Grey had gone to an extremity of the empire to try a great experiment, and the course which he was taking was quite consistent with his views. A member of a certain borough had stated to the Conference that he thought it was the duty of the Legislature to provide that every child should be compelled to attend school; and he believed that a similar view was taken by a great many Members of Parliament. A number of utilitarian philosophers had for thirty years been declaiming on the benefits of education; and he believed that Lord John Russell and Lord Grey had no desire whatever, in proposing this scheme, to bring the population into subjection to the Government; it was his opinion that their only object was to confer a benefit on the community. Now as regarded the resolution, he thought that if it went forth to the colonists that they (the Conference) were determined to help them, many would be greatly strengthened in their opposition to attempts, on the part of the Government, to develop its educational views. They were taunted by many with having heretofore received Government grants. It must be confessed, that they were students of truth, and that many incidents arose from time to time which tended to enlighten them as to the course they should pursue. He believed that the people of England were, morally and intellectually, far better educated than the people of Prussia; and they (the Dissenters) would not consent to resign their independence because of the contrary statements put forward on that subject.

Mr. WADDINGTON, minister, rose to communicate to the Conference a very melancholy fact. It was, that the missionaries of the London Society, in Demerara, went out subject to an instruction that no missionary should write to a newspaper without the sanction of a committee who constituted a presbytery in the colony. He might be ostracised for making such a statement, but he could not help saying, that those who, in simplicity, and evangelical integrity, and with the love of freedom, truth, and nonconformity in their hearts, went out to that colony, must be prepared to endure there a living martyrdom [hear, hear].

Mr. CHEETHAM, of Ashton-under-Lyne said, that he was, like Dr. Massie, a student of truth. He attended the Conference against his own will; and having listened attentively to the speeches delivered that morning, and on the previous day, he must say he regretted extremely that the Dissenters had not at once taken up the position that no Government ought to interfere at all in religious education. If the Government gave way on that point, he for one, would be quite willing to accept it [“No, no”].

Mr. SEABOURNE, minister, denied that the London Missionary Society acted generally on the principle which had been stated as regarded the colonies. He had himself been the editor of a paper in Demerara, and continued so until he was incapacitated by illness. The resolution was then put and carried.

Mr. J. ELY, minister, of Leeds, proposed the following resolution:—

That a petition to the House of Commons, embodying the declaratory resolutions of this Conference, and praying the House not merely to make no grant of money for carrying the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education of August and December last into effect, but also to present an humble address to the Crown to revoke the Order in Council whereby the said Committee was appointed, be signed by the Chairman, on behalf of the Conference, and entrusted for presentation to Mr. Bright.

If “Government education” meant anything, it meant compulsory education, with pains and penalties as the result of non-compliance [hear, hear]. In the great meeting at Leeds, comprising 15,000 persons, there were many, perhaps, who could not write, but their minds were educated and were thoroughly independent and English; and on that occasion the vast multitude declared that they would not have education on the terms proposed [cheers]. If the Government were allowed to interfere, the public mind would be emasculated, and the greatest social injury would be produced throughout the country.

Mr. DOBNEY, of Maidstone, briefly seconded the resolution, which was put, and carried unanimously.

Mr. G. W. ALEXANDER moved the next resolution:—

That this Conference have learned with satisfaction, that Thomas S. Duncombe, Esq., Member for Finsbury, has given notice for a motion, for the 19th inst., in the following terms:—“That on reading the order of the day for a committee of supply, he should move that previous to any grant of public money being assented to by this House for the purpose of carrying out the scheme of national education, as developed in the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, in August and December last, which Minutes had been presented to both Houses of Parliament, by command of her Majesty, a select committee be appointed to inquire into the justice and expediency of such scheme, and its probable annual cost; also, to inquire whether the regulations attached thereto do not unduly increase the influence of the Crown, invade the constitutional functions of Parliament, and interfere with the religious convictions and the civil rights of her Majesty's subjects. The committee to report their opinion, with the evidence, to the House.”

Dr. REED, in seconding the resolution, said he thought that if they demanded the revocation of the Committee of Council they would place themselves in the position most likely to influence the Government and the Legislature.

Mr. FISHBORNE, minister, moved an amendment in favour of presenting a petition for the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons.

After considerable discussion the amendment was rejected, and the original resolution was passed.

The CHAIRMAN of the Conference (Mr. Alderman Kershaw) then resumed the chair, having just entered the room with the other members of the deputation.

Mr. HINTON, minister, having been called upon to state what took place in the interview with the Marquis of Lansdowne, came forward, and said—Gentlemen, we have been in compliance with the resolution and the list prepared, to the Marquis of Lansdowne, whom we found evidently under considerable pain and inconvenience from an attack of gout, which is not yet altogether removed. His lordship received us with perfect courtesy, heard what we had to say, and made a few observations of his own. He did not, however, converse so freely as when I saw him before, owing apparently, and I have no doubt really, to the suffering which he experienced. The Chairman introduced the matter to him in a serious, appropriate, and weighty manner, and several other gentlemen spoke, though not so many as would have spoken if they had not perceived the inconvenience to which the interview subjected his lordship [hear, hear]. The interview was, therefore, somewhat short. Our sentiments were freely expressed; and the resolutions of this Conference were read *in extenso*. His lordship said he was sorry to see that so much difference of opinion existed, and that he would be glad to find that it was possible to promote the cause of National Education in such a manner as to conciliate differences, but that he scarcely knew how it could be done. The matter was, he said, in the hands of Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, and he (the Marquis of Lansdowne) would communicate to him the character of the interview. Upon the whole the interview which took place left the impression that the Government were still bent upon their present course.

Dr. HAMILTON said: I wish simply to add, that if we have gained nothing, nothing have we lost [hear, hear]. We made a truthful exposition of our sentiments; and I told his lordship that it would be trifling with his time and patience to ask for any modification of the scheme [cheers]. I said, we were not to be satisfied by any possible arrangement, for that we were opposed, on principle, to any interference [cheers].

Mr. E. SMITH, of Sheffield, moved the following resolution:—

That Mr. Bright be requested, in case the motion, of which notice has been given by Mr. Duncombe, should be lost, to move such further amendment as may seem to him best adapted to defeat the intentions of Government, and to place on record, the declared sentiments of this Conference.

Mr. BISHOP having seconded the resolution, it was carried unanimously.

Mr. TAYLOR proposed, and Mr. J. N. GOULTRY, of Brighton, minister, seconded the following resolution:—

That a circular be addressed to each member of the House of Commons, containing the resolutions in which the Conference have expressed the grounds of their opposition to the Government scheme of education, and devoting attention to the prayer of the petition presented on behalf of the Conference.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

The following resolution was proposed by Mr. T. W. DAVIES (minister), seconded by Mr. E. W. RICHARD, and carried:—

That, in order to secure the earliest and most effective publication of the proceedings of this Conference, the extra numbers of the *Patriot* and *Nonconformist* newspapers, of Friday next, be kept on sale at the offices of those papers respectively.

A resolution was proposed, recommending the calling of a meeting in the city of London, to oppose the Government scheme; but it was rejected by a large majority, the ground of objection being that the Conference would not be justified in attempting to interfere with the conduct of the citizens of London.

Dr. HAMILTON moved—

That the Conference, at its rising, do adjourn till to-morrow morning at the King's Head, Poultry.

Mr. HARE seconded the resolution, which was agreed to.

Mr. G. W. ALEXANDER proposed, and Mr. J. MOSLEY seconded, the following resolution:—

That the cordial thanks of this Conference be presented to James Kershaw, Esq., for the distinguished ability, patience, and impartiality with which he has presided over the protracted sittings of this Conference.

The resolution having been carried by acclamation,

The CHAIRMAN, in returning thanks, said he trusted that when the proceedings had terminated they would carry into the country, in their respective localities, the spirit which they had exhibited on that occasion; and he expected to see great results at some future day arising from the determined spirit of the Nonconformists of this country.

The Conference then adjourned until Friday morning.

CONFERENCE AT BROWN'S HOTEL.

A Conference of Delegates from all parts of the Kingdom, took place on Wednesday evening, at Brown's Hotel, Palace-yard. By five o'clock, the large room was crowded. Amongst the Members of Parliament present, were Mr. Greene, Mr. Yorke, Lord Sandon, Mr. Bright, Mr. Hindley, Mr. Busfield, and Mr. Duncombe.

Alderman Kershaw, of Manchester, took the chair.

The CHAIRMAN stated the object of their meeting. They were anxious to state to Members of Parliament that deep injury would be inflicted upon the Nonconformist body, if the Minutes of the Council, in the state in which they were then presented to their notice, should be sanctioned.

Mr. BAINES, jun., at considerable length and with great force, adverted to several of the leading objections to the scheme, and concluded amidst the cheers of the assembly.

Mr. JOSEPH STURGE said that the members of Parliament generally could have no idea of the amount of public feeling, as the public press was almost united to oppose them. At a large meeting which took place upon this subject in Birmingham, at which 7,000 persons were present, after some hours' discussion, the numbers opposed to the Government scheme was as three to one. They were earnestly desirous that the public should be fully informed.

Dr. VAUGHAN stated his opinion that, up to a certain point, they were all agreed—that if the religious character of the Government scheme remained they could not touch the money. If it could be

regarded purely as a secular or social measure, there was a considerable difference of feeling amongst them.

Mr. J. H. HINTON stated a fact as indicative of the feeling amongst them, namely, that in an assembly of several hundred delegates, that morning, a resolution to the effect that Government should not interfere to educate the people, was carried after a long discussion, with only two dissentients.

Mr. JOSIAH CONDER expressed their obligation to Mr. Duncombe [cheers], and expressed a wish to be informed of the best manner of proceeding in Parliament.

Mr. BRIGHT said it was not desirable that members should be called upon to express their opinions till the measure was brought forward in Parliament.

Lord SANDON said that he did not come there to express his opinion, but was brought there by two friends to be informed. The observations he had heard were grave considerations, but he did not say that they preponderated in his mind. If Government could conciliate the Nonconformist body, they would have achieved a great advantage. He touched upon the constitutional question involved, and observed that there might be reasons that would overbear that objection.

Mr. HINDLEY asked Mr. Greene in what position they would be on Monday evening? If it was correct, not more than two amendments could be made. Mr. Duncombe had moved one, and he wished to know whether more than one other amendment could be made? It was very important that this should be understood.

Mr. GREENE (Chairman of Committees of the House of Commons) said: Upon the question that the order of the day be read, Mr. Duncombe may make his motion, which, if negatived, the next question which will be put will be, “That the Speaker do leave the chair?” On which question it is no doubt competent for another amendment to be proposed; but it would be regarded as rather a factious course to pursue, after the question had been fairly debated and decided on the first division.

Mr. DUNCOMBE thought it not prudent for members of Parliament to express their opinions at that moment. Everything that he had heard confirmed him in the policy of the motion of which he had given notice. The unconstitutional nature of the measure involved a grave question. So important a question as the education of this country should not depend upon a parcel of Minutes [hear, hear]. They had a right to go to the House of Commons and say, “If you will not give us an Act, let us have a committee.” He expressed his pleasure that the meeting approved of the motion of which he had given notice.

Dr. MASSIE said, that if it was possible the House of Commons should be induced to postpone the measure till it was fairly before the country, and time given to understand it thoroughly.

Mr. YORKE said, that he was endeavouring to bring his mind to a right conclusion, but whether his vote was agreeable or disagreeable to them, it should be an honest one.

Mr. BRIGHT said, it was a bad principle that of paying for religious instruction. That any portion of the public taxes should be applied to teach young people was as objectionable as it was to apply them to teach old people [hear]. They owed a debt of gratitude to Mr. Baines [hear]. His statements were such as could not be overturned. The question was little understood in the House of Commons, but the opinions of Members were moderating as they found the constituencies were taking up the question [hear].

After some further conversation the meeting broke up.

AGGREGATE MEETING AT EXETER HALL.

This meeting took place at Exeter Hall, on Thursday evening, J. Bright, Esq., M.P., in the chair. The attendance was as numerous as any witnessed on previous occasions. On the platform were the following:—Mr. Alderman Kershaw, of Manchester, Mr. Joseph Sturge, of Birmingham, Mr. E. Baines, of Leeds, Mr. R. Ainslie, Dr. Hamilton, Dr. Jenkyn, Dr. Hoppus, J. Ely, W. M. Bunting, T. W. Davids, W. Forster, Nathaniel Griffin, Mr. B. Hanbury, Mr. H. Rutt, Mr. E. Miall, Mr. R. F. Hunt, Mr. G. W. Alexander, Mr. J. W. Green, Mr. T. Cassell, Mr. D. W. Wire, Mr. W. Woodhouse, Mr. W. R. Baker, Mr. J. H. Hinton, A.M., Mr. J. Rutter, Mr. Alderman Meek, of York, Mr. H. Buchan, Mr. A. Reed, B.A., Mr. G. Harrison, Mr. W. Morris, Mr. T. Thompson, Mr. R. Richards, Mr. W. Elliott, Mr. H. Seabornes, Mr. R. Simson, A.M., &c., &c.

A few minutes after six,

The CHAIRMAN said—I confess to this meeting that I do not recollect ever having stood before an audience of my fellow-countrymen under feelings of greater responsibility than those I experience at this moment. I am so sensible of the importance of the question which we have to-night met to discuss, that I have been anxious to avoid the position in which the partiality of my friends has placed me, but still I could not shrink from any portion of duty which seemed to fall to my lot in connexion with the agitation which is now being carried on with respect to the Minutes of Council on the question of education. I might almost have taken it for granted, that the audience which I now address will not by any portion of the public press or of our opponents be pronounced hostile to the education of the people [hear, hear]. There are newspapers, however, which have taunted the Nonconformist body with now, for the first time opposing a cause of which in past times they have been the advocates. I will answer such a charge by saying, that if there be one thing more notorious than another it is, that it is to the Nonconformist body pre-eminently that the remarkable progress in educational effort which has taken place in this country within the last thirty or forty years is to be traced [cheers]. It is not possible, I believe, for a priesthood like that which is established in this country, to be very anxious that the great mass of the people should be educated [hear, hear]; but it is possible, that when they perceive that other parties than themselves are in the field, and that by the extension of education the great mass of the people are being gradually but rapidly drawn from subservience to, and dependence on, themselves—it is possible, I say, that they should then step forward and endeavour, by the use of similar weapons, to maintain and perpetuate their own power. There is, if I am not mistaken, something in the very essence and spirit of Dissent, or Nonconformity, which involves universal education. Were it not that we and our forefathers have thought, and thought deeply, upon religious questions, we should now have a dull uniformity in religious matters throughout the kingdom [cheers]. And the very fact that we have bestowed so much thought on these questions is enough to prove that the cultivation of the mind and the strengthening of the intellect has not been overlooked by our body. I pass, then, from that charge, if it be made (I despise it utterly), with the remark that what we have done in past times and are now doing, affords a complete answer to any such statement. Proceeding to the consideration of this question generally, I would ask the meeting to look at it in two aspects—the one as it affects all those who dissent from the Established Church, the other as it affects the country at large, without respect to particular sects. Now, the very circumstance of there being Dissenters in the country, is conclusive that there is something which somebody thinks it worth while to dissent from [cheers]. Now, we dissent from the Established Church—some of us because we think its doctrines not sound; others because we question its polity; and others, again (and I think these are the greater part), because we believe that it is not a just and Christian course for any Government to tax a whole people for the purpose of teaching the tenets of a sect [hear, hear]. If there be one question upon which Nonconformists are united more than upon all others, it is in the holding of that great principle. We maintain that there is no sanction whatever in the New Testament, and that there is no justification in any success which has attended the experiment in practice, for the polity which has been pursued by our Government for generations past—the maintenance in the country of one particular form of faith and worship, and the endeavouring, by legal penalties, to make all the people conform to it [cheers]. I now approach this question with reference to that particular principle. If there were nothing else in this educational scheme of which we could complain, it would be sufficient to destroy every particle of value which it might otherwise have in the eyes of many Nonconformists, that we find it is intended to establish throughout the whole of this kingdom the teaching of particular forms and particular creeds in religion [a voice, “No, no”]. We shall see in a moment whether the gentleman who says “no” be right. I say it is intended to establish and make absolute the teaching of certain forms of religion, or of religious belief, in thousands of schools throughout the whole of this kingdom to which these Minutes apply [cheers]. I do not know whether it be necessary for me to show that this is the case. I have here, however, the celebrated Minutes, and I find it stated, under the head of No. 6, “In schools connected with the Church of England, the children will be required to repeat the Catechism, and to show that they understand its meaning, and are acquainted with the outline of Scripture history; and the parochial clergyman will assist in this part of [the

examination" [laughter and cheers]. I admit that the system does not require every child to learn the Catechism, but it makes it an absolute condition that no one shall receive the benefit of the public funds unless there be full proof of adherence to the practice of some form of religion in these schools. And it is no answer to me to say that they allow any opinions or peculiarities to be taught in a school belonging to any sect. If this were a sufficient answer, it would be an equally good answer to those Nonconformists who object to an Established Church, to say that out of the public funds there shall in future be paid to every Independent, Baptist, or other minister, a portion of his annual salary, and that he too shall thus be made dependent on the State [hear, hear]. I do not deny that there is something like an appearance of political justice and impartiality in the scheme, but we have to consider it not merely in its political bearing, but with reference also to the great question of religious teaching under the central guidance and pay of the State [hear, hear, hear, and cheers]. I am persuaded that if the Dissenters of this country had permitted the Minutes to pass, and allowed this form of education to be established without entering a most solemn protest, they could not hereafter have opened their lips, or raised their hands in condemnation of the principles of a State Church. But now I turn to the question as it respects the country at large. I will not say a syllable against the principles of those who differ from me in religion. I complain of no man's going with the Episcopal Church, but this I do say, that on looking back to the history of this country, for many years, you will find that the clergy of that church have been ranged on one side, and that the vast majority of the people, and of the ministers of the Dissenters have been ranged on the other. This may have been no more than an accidental circumstance [laughter]. But I know that there prevails an opinion amongst the members of the Government, that the more the ministers of religion can be allied with the State, the more likely is it that they will be instrumental in keeping the people quiet [laughter]. A clergyman of the Church of England called upon me very lately for a subscription to a new church which he was building, and when I declined to subscribe on conscientious grounds, changing his tack, he said, alluding to the population amongst which I lived, "At all events you must allow that we teach the people to obey, and to be quiet." This is the precise reason why the State allies itself with the Church. I cannot avoid referring to the recent assumption of power on the part of many ministers of the Church. Why, at this moment, there are many young clergymen assuming higher dignities and claiming greater power than their grandfathers would have dared to claim, and yet the Government allow these men to be the teachers of the children in religious matters, and unless they give the children a certificate which shall open the door to future advancement why that door must remain closed [hear, hear]. A meeting was held last night, in Freemasons' hall, to which I desire for one moment to allude. Amongst those who attended, was the Bishop of Norwich. That prelate considers this a most impartial measure, and he holds that the Church is making marvellous concession to us [laughter]. It is delightful to find that such persons have come at last to feel that Dissenters must be treated with on equal terms. Much allusion has been made to the United States. The education given there does not subject the people to the Government. There are certain educational districts with which the Government has nothing to do, and there is no State-church to interfere [hear, hear]. If the people of this country are placed in the same position in that respect as those of the United States, I dare say we shall have no difficulty in dealing with the question [laughter]. I might speak of the taste of the Bishop of Norwich. That dignitary spoke of certain things which "had been said by somebody from Leeds" [laughter]. Now I had always fancied that the Bishop of Norwich was a sensible man and a gentleman; and certainly there has been nothing in the course pursued by Mr. Baines on this question which does not entitle him to the admiration even of those who differ from him. Why, it is a very strange thing, that when a gentleman like Mr. Baines has made the sacrifices which he has done in order to enlighten the public mind on what he conceives to be a most important point—I say it requires some assurance for a good easy old gentleman like the Bishop of Norwich, who stays at home at his ease, and is provided for most sumptuously by the State, to talk of Mr. Baines as "somebody from Leeds, who is making a clamour on this question." Well, then, he also blamed the Dissenters, because they talked about filthy lucre; and he observed, that it was for the Dissenters to say that pounds, shillings and pence, and filthy lucre were to be associated in the great moral work of regenerating the people. I think it was stated by a bishop in the House of Lords when the recent arrangements were made for supporting the payment of a bishop that if the payment were reduced to £4,000 a year no gentleman could be prevailed upon to mount the bench. Now, I confess I have no hope that the leopard will change his skin [hear, hear]. I do not believe that there has come such a change over the opinions of the dignitaries of the Church, as would make them jump eagerly at anything which is impartial as between them and Dissenters [laughter]. Permit me to say we are as able to understand the proposed Minutes as the Cabinet themselves. Most of us are interested in schools connected with chapels, and many in schools not so connected; and we have had ample means of coming to a sound conclusion in reference to the proposed system [hear, hear]. There is one other point to which I must allude; viz., the rumoured negotiations [hear, hear]. I understand it to be a fact that, when these Minutes first came out the Government did intend to make grants to Roman Catholic schools; and that, indeed, was the only honest and fair course which they could pursue. When, however, they found that there was danger of the Wesleyans joining the Dissenters generally, and of the united voice being too loud for their scheme, they appear to have made offers of negotiation to the Wesleyans, and by and by you will find this to be the case—that although they have made changes in the negotiations with the Wesleyans, there is an old minute of some years' standing which says that these grants shall only be made to schools in which the Authorized Version of the Scriptures is read (cries of "Shame, shame"). I shall indeed feel deeply grieved if those who advocated Catholic Emancipation shall be proved to have given their sanction to such a cowardly and dastardly evasion. If the Government recommend this scheme on the ground of impartiality, we may fairly throw it back in their teeth for the reason which I have intimated. You may rely upon it that the most determined supporters of the Established Church to be found in the House of Commons (I state this advisedly) have now more faith in the present Ministry as regards the maintenance of the supremacy of that church than they would feel in any number of men who could be chosen to form a cabinet out of the two Houses of Parliament. And yet the Government are in their present offices through our exertions [cheers]. I have been accustomed to connect myself, in some degree, with a certain political party; but if it shall come to this, that the great Nonconformist body in this country is to be dared to the combat, and a Government, which has hitherto professed itself Liberal, shall ally itself wholly with the State Church, why then it will become a matter for serious consideration hereafter, and before long, whether there cannot be some organization established throughout the kingdom, which, if it do not aid Nonconformist principles, will, at least, make it unsafe for any Government to commit further aggressions upon them [loud cheers]. I hope that we shall henceforth disregard all taints and opposition, and present a united front on this question [great cheering].

Mr. HARR read a letter from Mr. B. Hawes, M.P. for Lambeth, to whom, in common with many other members, an invitation had been sent, regretting his inability to attend, on account of a necessity for his being present in the House of Commons.

JOSEPH STURGE, Esq., rose to propose the following resolution:—
"That this meeting, having considered the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education of August and December, 1846, and other official documents connected therewith, is of opinion that the scheme therein developed is one which, while affording no reasonable security for the better instruction of the people, cannot be carried into effect without injury to those religious denominations which dissent from the Established Church, nor without serious detriment to the freedom and independence of the community."

He said he was one of those who went beyond the resolution [hear, hear]. There was no hope of any education being concocted by the Government which would be impartial, and would not tend to strengthen the Church Establishment; but he thought that, even if they had no such Establishment, it would be impossible for Government to pay for any part of the religious education of the people without infringing on religious liberty. They would recollect how, a little while ago, many who belonged to that Church raised their voice against the Maynooth grant; but he had often felt surprised that such persons could not see that it was a violation of the consciences of their Dissenting brethren, that their own Establishment was paid out of the revenues of the country. For his own part, he should not consider it right for a Jew who was a citizen of this country to be taxed to buy a New Testament to teach this child Christianity. Such a person might fairly turn round on

him and say, that an enforcement of the tax was a trampling under foot of one of the greatest principles of their religion—viz., that of doing to others as they would have others do to them. He might fairly appeal to the example of their divine leader to show that there was nothing in his course to justify such a proceeding. In an interview which had been held with the Marquis of Lansdowne that noble Marquis said, that their arguments went to show that the money already granted ought not to have been received. He (Mr. Sturge) deeply regretted that it had been, and he was happy to hear that £5,000 was being invested in the funds, in order to enable the British and Foreign School Society to repay what it had received. He trusted that they would thus be enabled to stand on firm and independent ground. By accepting the Government aid, they would, in fact, paralyze all voluntary effort. So far from grudging the amount of money to be applied, he believed that twenty millions, instead of two millions, would be cheerfully conceded, if it were thought that that was the right way to accomplish the object, but he believed the contrary would be the effect. The other day he had stated on the platform at Birmingham that the revenues of the Church of England were six millions. A clergyman corrected him, and stated them at four millions; but even if that were the amount, he would ask what had the clergy done towards the education of the people? They themselves had now discovered that the people were, after all, in a very ignorant and degraded condition. They ought not to forget the constitution of this Board of Education. The members of it all belonged to the Church of England, and so also did the inspectors, as far as the appointments had proceeded. The Marquis of Lansdowne had told them, indeed, that he would be happy to appoint suitable men who were Dissenters; but the question was, who would be considered suitable [laughter]. When a number of school children were asked what was the meaning of the text, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," their reply was, "To pay your taxes cheerfully." He was inclined to think that the master who inculcated that principle would be considered a tolerably suitable person, whether he were a Churchman or a Dissenter, for the office of inspector. An inspector in Prussia, when examining the children of the school, asked them who was the source of political power. The answer given was "the people." The inspector asked who taught them so? A boy said, "Our master," and mark the result—that poor master was obliged to fly from his country, and he is now teaching at a Sheffield-school, an exile from his own land. It was remarkable that while these Minutes were being concocted in England, others had been concocted for the colonies; and he believed that the principle on which the Government acted would even justify compulsion as regarded attendance at school. He knew an instance in connection with the [Lancasterian] school at Birmingham in which some boys were obliged to walk three miles from the adjoining village, because the clergyman made it a condition of receiving education that the children who attended school on week-days should also attend the Sunday-school, and of course when they went to the Sunday-school they were expected also to go to church. The extent to which similar conduct would be carried if this measure were passed, it would be difficult to conceive. As regarded the Society of Friends, of which he was a member, they had always been considered adherents of the Voluntary Principle, and he believed the greatest bribe that could be offered would not induce them to take a single sixpence of this money for the purpose of education. With their struggle for religious liberty they must combine that for civil freedom, and he rejoiced that this measure seemed likely to lead to a closer union between the working and the middle classes. It came them all to use every legitimate means for the accomplishment of the common object [cheers].

Dr. HAMILTON, of Leeds, on rising to second the resolution said he was "somebody from Leeds," and though he was not Bishop Stanley's own dear somebody he was not ashamed of the cause in which he was engaged. Education was the cause which rallied them that night. By education, they did not mean a settled drift or organization of the mind, but the liberation of intellect and the development of character, and it was because they were thus jealous of proper education that they would not stoop to the acceptance of pseudo education, like that proposed. Education was a sacred thing—a matter, not for the interference of monarch, or constable—too delicately susceptible for sceptre or for truncheon [laughter]. He had lately seen, in battle array against their cause, the Roman Catholic, the Puseyite, the Evangelical clergyman, and the Chartist. He wanted to know what was the principle of cohesion with such parties. He believed that they were all looking for gain, and hence their unanimity was wonderful. They had strong cravings for the public purse, and it was an insatiable appetite that gnawed them [laughter]. This measure was founded on certain fallacies which it would be easy to expose. It had been wrought into the public conception that the aim, design, and genius of the Government was to educate the people. How did the Government acquire the right? Government was a trusteeship—was this in the trust deed? It came from the people; did they, the people, so ordain and constitute it [hear, hear]? They must recollect, that the Government was not the father of the people, but the people was the father of the Government [cheers]. If the Government were their father it should perhaps teach them; but they were its father, and they therefore should teach it [cheers]. Besides, if education were a duty, there must be a sanction afforded to that duty. What was to be the enforcement? How should they compel the people to learn? Again, if education were a duty on the part of the Government, how was it that Government had been so dilatory, and had only just opened its establishment [laughter]? This measure assumed the non-education of the people at present, but he thought that Mr. Baines had clearly shown, that the representations on that subject were at all events exaggerated. Where was this non-educated people? He lived in a populous town where the supply of education greatly exceeded the demand; it was the juveniles only that were wanting [laughter]; and he believed that the same remark would apply to many other parts of the country. The effect of this extended education would be to create a dead level. Without intending any imputation on the house of Russell he would call it a Bedford flat. Not only would it be a system of gagging, but, in the language of the dramatist, it would "clap a padlock on the mind." A great deal was said about the impartiality of the measure; they were told they could take the money if they liked. A worthy tinsmith in the town of Bradford, when he received notice of certain dues to the clergyman, and put in the plea that he never went to the parish church, received from the clergyman the following laconic reply:—"The Church is open—I must preach—you must pay." A year rolled round, and the tables were turned. A bill was sent in to the vicar for divers cuttings of hair, shavings, and manipulations. He called at the shop of the tinsmith and said that not one of the items was correct. "I was ready—the razors were set—the scissors were prepared—you must pay just the same." Such was the reply given to him [great laughter]. The money, however, was not paid, because the party had no Ecclesiastical Court in which to throw the vicar. The present case was like that of tectotallers who, on being offered a half-dozen of wine, declined to take it, and were then compelled to pay for the wine which was drunk by others. Mr. B. Macaulay, said that, in principle, there could be no difference between £10,000 and £30,000. This formed an additional reason for opposing this scheme. Voluntaryism was said to be mischievous. He had never contended that it was perfect; it was imperfect for the same reason that Christianity appeared so, because it acted through an imperfect medium. If this measure were successful, there would be a breaking down of the public mind. From the time of Walpole down to that moment, it had been the custom to buy public men with the offices of state, and it was now proposed to buy the whole people in a similar manner. He trusted that the nation would resist such an attempt—that the tide of public feeling would be directed against the measure—and that it would not be allowed to proceed [cheers].

The resolution was then put and carried, there being about twelve dissentients.

Dr. MASSIE then proposed, in a speech for which we regret that we cannot find room, the following resolution:—

"That the virtual entrusting of legislative power in a matter of such vast importance as the education of the people to a committee of the Privy Council, appointed by the Crown, is dangerous to public liberty; and that the effecting of so great a change by a mere money vote of the House of Commons rather than by the usual method of a bill in Parliament, is a violation of the spirit and practice of the British constitution."

Mr. EDWARD MIAL, in seconding the resolution, said he should do his best to observe the counsel given to them by their Chairman, and stick to the point [loud cheers]. He would not promise to be short, but he hoped to be so. He was one of those who would scarcely be suspected, by those who knew him, of having any very close and intimate sympathy with the Whig party [laughter]. He did not believe that the gentlemen who constituted that party were worse than the gentlemen of any other political party; but he always stood alarmed for the liberties of his country when he saw a

weak political party put into power. They were tempted, by the very position in which they were placed, to play havoc with the principles of the constitution entrusted to their care. And if he had read the constitutional history of the country aright, whatever might have been the struggles of the Whig party for Whig principles (and he gave them full credit for all they had done), he would say, that such unconstitutional laws had never been made by any political party in England as had been made by the Whigs [hear, hear]. They talked, and talked loudly, when in opposition, of the beauty of the constitution; and oftentimes he feared that that word was so frequently thrust in their way when they were seeking an advance to liberty and expansion, that they were apt to regard it as almost if not altogether a thing without significance. But it was important to recollect that the forms of the constitution were settled by the wisdom of men in whose hearts burned the genuine fire of liberty, and just in proportion as these forms were cast aside were all the safeguards of popular freedom cast aside with them [hear]. He might have a word or two to speak regarding the House of which their Chairman was a shining member—shining in the midst of darkness [cheers]. He might have some few things to say of it that were true but not flattering [hear]. But this he would say of the House of Commons, that although they may have done many foolish things—although in times past they might have exhibited a sad insensibility to the wants of the people—although they might oftentimes have obstructed the people when they had sought only justice for themselves and for their offspring—the House of Commons had hitherto borne this character that it knew at least how to respect and how to guard its own privileges [hear, hear]. As that House virtually, although not actually, was the representation of the Commons of England, he rejoiced that there had been in time past a disposition to resent the meddling of any body with the privileges of the House of Commons. Where was the House of Commons now? [cheers.] A more daring infringement upon the province and right of Parliament than these Minutes and the mode of their introduction exhibited, he believed had never yet been exhibited to the public mind [hear, hear]. Was the education of the whole of the labouring classes of England an unimportant question? Why, he saw Parliament was so intent upon its own privileges that it would stoop to the passing of a Bill—[cries of "Speak up."] He could not give them more voice than God had given him [cheers]. He gave them all he could [hear, hear]. He was referring to the condescension of Parliament in stooping to pass Bills at sundry times for things that might be regarded as far less momentous than the learning and intellect and heart of the nation. He saw them, for example, trying to prevent cruelty to animals, and they did not make over that work to a Committee of the Privy Council—he saw them undertaking to pass railroad and turnpike bills, and he thought they would resent, as they did resent, any interference with the right of Parliament to manage these matters—and yet almost without notice, Lord John Russell came forward, or would shortly come forward, and ask their consent to a mere money vote, which would sanction the whole of these Minutes of Council and put into the hands of a small committee a legislative power in all matters pertaining to the education of the people [hear, hear]! He cared not of what party the members of the House of Commons might be the representatives—he cared not whether they were Whigs or Tories, or Radicals or Free Traders—but he did, from the depth of his soul, wonder that the House of Commons had not taken fire at the insult offered them by the Prime Minister of the country, and protested that, however they might like a national education, they would see that that national education should only be carried out and sanctioned under their own legislative direction [hear, hear]. There were some symptoms of the present times which he confessed were to him appalling. He wondered how it was that on this matter the press, professing to represent the mind of the country—that the press had not entered its most solemn and determined protest against that infringement of constitutional law. When there was so much at stake—when so vast a field was put under the cultivation and care of a few individuals, and those occupying a position so comparatively irresponsible—he did feel surprised, nay more, he quivered within himself and grew pale, that the *Times*, the most splendid example the world ever yet produced of perfection of machinery to bring to bear its own sentiments upon the public mind—that that organ, which might be so efficiently used for the liberties of the people, and occupying so large a place in the minds of its countrymen, could feel it at all consistent with its dignity or its position to laugh at the mere constitutional objection. He spoke not now of the *Daily News* ("a daily nuisance")—but he did most sincerely regret that the press in general had not taken its stand, at all events—whatever might be its view of the expediency or justice of the great scheme of national education—he regretted it had not taken its stand upon this preliminary objection, and insisted that it should be brought forward in a proper and constitutional way [cheers]. Lord John Russell was about to lead them into a mess. They were to have—they had, last session, some very extraordinary confessions and conversions; and the present Parliament needed confessions, but they would not be made. There would be the voting by a majority of that House, that the principles which they held to be true, and which were embodied in acts of Parliament many years ago, were not true for the present occasion—that the test and corporation acts should be revived in another form [hear], and that the way to all petty offices of State, to the office of excise, of landing-waiter, of clerk and of schoolmaster, should be accessible only through a religious avenue. Practically speaking, too, they were well aware of what the character of that avenue would be; and he would just call their attention to one feature of the Minutes that, perhaps, might not strike many minds. They would see that the appointment to places of those who had passed their examination would depend almost entirely on the recommendation of the inspector, backed, as it would be, by the guarantee of the clergyman on the one hand, and the manager of the Dissenting schools on the other, that the religious education of the party was in a satisfactory state. Let them look here—all the higher offices of the State were occupied by men identified in sympathy and feeling with the Establishment, the patronage was in their hands, and they would have the opportunity furnished them by the simple fact that they were in possession of the guarantee from the clergyman on the one hand, and the manager of the schools on the other—they would be in fact in possession of the religious belief of every individual who made application to them, through these Minutes, for office [hear, hear]. Those whose testimonials were not approved or were put aside in a drawer as not eligible for public office. The Whigs had boasted themselves of Catholic Emancipation as their greatest measure, and he gave them honour for it—the Dissenters had helped them to do it, and they did it chiefly in their name. They knew that they could never permanently repeal it, because the spirit of the age was against it. But they were determined, according to reports upon which they might depend—they were determined to suspend it for a short period in order that they might purchase the adherence of the Wesleyans and thus carry their scheme through Parliament. Now, he did say that the members of the House of Commons who were a party to that most infamous jugglery [loud cheers]—he did say that those who would sanction for a moment such political profligacy, must be dead to all those feelings of honour which ought to dwell in the bosom of statesmen [loud and general cheering]. Not to detain them on that point, there were other principles to which they had already given their legislative adhesion which they would violate by their sanctioning the Minutes of Council. And what were they going to do all that for? The pretence was that they were going to educate the poor. Dr. Hamilton had already shewn them that such was not their object—the object was to make the schoolmaster comfortable. It would not go into the depraved corners of their cities, or travel over the wastes of their rural districts, nor would it reclaim from vice the usual tenants of their gaols. It would not extend to the poor ignorant class who were unable to send their children to school even though it was without cost [hear, hear]. There could, therefore, in his opinion, be no occasion for all that haste. Lord John Russell might as well put it off for another general election [hear]; twelve months delay could not ruin the country. He thought there ought to be some slight respite until the will of the people had been ascertained. The noble lord, it appeared, was determined to persevere—well, he for one was not altogether sorry for his determination. They who were Nonconformists must ally themselves with general civil liberty throughout the land, and retire to their Torres Vedras, sweeping the constituencies before them. They must retire upon their principles, and determine to abide by them until the fair opportunity was given to them to come forth again with irresistible might, and sweep away, not merely these Minutes of Council education, but that which was the root of all the evil, the establishment of this country [vehement cheering, which was several times renewed—the larger portion of the meeting rising and waving their hats]. Let them adopt that defensive agitation until they could assume the courage to act upon the offensive and carry their principles right into the enemy's camp [cheers]. There were many things which he could bear to see inflicted upon the people of his native land, but there was one thing which he did earnestly hope never to live to see;—let the judgment of Heaven descend upon them in the shape of blight or famine—let them have the sword in the midst of them, cutting off those most dear to them before their eyes—let them

have despotism—civil despotism in its worst and most offensive form—even then their minds would be free as the breath of Heaven; but, oh! let them never submit that their country, by any arts or machinations whatever, crammed in by whatever political party, and for whatever political convenience—let them never allow their countrymen and their posterity to become a crouching, whining, slavish, priest-ridden, thoughtless, and Godless population [tremendous cheering].

The CHAIRMAN then put the resolution to the meeting, which he declared to be carried almost unanimously, only three or four hands in the vast assemblage being held up against it.

Mr. EDWARD BAINES, jun., of Leeds, then came forward, and was loudly and enthusiastically cheered. I thank you for the most flattering reception you have been pleased to give to my name, and which leads us to think that the way in which that humble name has been mentioned repeatedly of late in the papers of this city, has not been considered by you so much in the light of a stigma as in the light of an honour [cheers]. It has been stated by several of your daily papers that this agitation which now exists throughout the country against this measure of the Government is "a Baines agitation." This is a poor, paltry artifice, partly for the purpose of casting some obloquy on me, but much more for the purpose of disguising the real magnitude and universality of this movement. I should be proud of being the author of such an agitation, for it is that I have devoted myself to rouse my countrymen to the dangers that threaten them; and I hope the time is far distant when it shall be necessary for an Englishman to apologize for too lively a zeal on behalf of their liberties: but this magnificent assembly—the Conference of 500 delegates from all parts of England and Wales, and from every section, not of the Nonconforming community alone, but of the whole community—attest that this is not a movement with which a humble individual can be identified, but that it is a movement arising from a sense of great public danger [hear, hear]. After the observations that have been made upon my name I hope I may be permitted to say, that if there is a man that stands in this land disinterested in the present movement it is myself. I cannot say the same of Mr. Mill, for he has always stood aloof from the Whigs. Now I am a Whig myself, and have been identified all my political life with that party. I uphold the principles of the glorious revolution of 1688, and I am proud of the memory of Charles James Fox. I have exulted to belong to the party that abolished slavery and the slave-trade—which virtually emancipated the Roman Catholics—which gained the rights for the Dissenters—which carried Parliamentary reform—and which did many other acts of good service to the country. But Whig as I am, and always have been, I deeply lament to say that I must now come out from my party [great cheering]. In this matter of education, I must say that, as a person who has taken an active part in the promotion of schools and mechanics' institutes, and every other establishment for the advancement of education among the working-classes, I come forward to oppose a measure proffered for the education of the working-classes. I come forward in opposition to my own natural bias; but I do it because I see great and mighty evil impending over the liberties of my country [loud cheers]. In regard to the newspaper press, I am not disposed to return evil for evil, but good for evil, and wish to offer an apology for those members of the Liberal press who have taken too favourable a view of the Government measure. It is very natural for those who are identified with a party to follow those who are their old leaders; and in this way I account for the fact, that many of the Liberal papers—and I may apply the same meaning to many of the members of the House of Commons—have taken a favourable view of the Government measure. But there is another reason I must assign to account for the fact, which is not quite so creditable, and that is, that I find now, as in former years, that in great questions relating to religious liberty, there is much ignorance on the part of our public writers. I have been blamed for going too far; but I beg on the contrary to say, that I stand upon the usages of the country, which are for free and independent education. I think, therefore, we stand upon a rock when we say, that we are identified with the old usages and that we are not disposed to sanction this importation from foreign countries of a system allied to foreign despotism, but alien to the character and the disposition of Englishmen. I have looked, for some years with great anxiety and some distrust to the passion for adopting the continental system of universal Government superintendence and centralized power. I firmly believe that it is the wish of the Ministers of the day, and of the opposition party also to bring the whole of the education, and the whole of the religion of the country under Government pay and patronage [hear, hear]; and, believing, that where that system exists, it is found alike, unfavourable to religious truth and civil liberty, I will give the new passion of our statesmen my most determined and persevering opposition [cheers]. The resolution put into my hand I move very heartily, because it expresses the sentiments I have been for some time advocating. Mr. Baines here read the resolution, as follows:—

"That while in the deliberate judgment of this meeting it forms no point of the right or duty of the Government to interfere either by patronage or by control in the question of education, they are profoundly sensible of the value and importance of promoting by voluntary and independent means the sound instruction of the people, and recognize with great satisfaction the rapid progress which during the last few years has been made in the establishment of efficient schools, and in improving the quality of the tuition provided for the children of the working classes; and that this meeting acknowledge the obligation to use their utmost exertions towards supplying whatever deficiency may still exist."

I perfectly coincide with the sentiments contained in that resolution, and believe it of the utmost possible importance. It is neither the duty nor the right of the Government to superintend the education of the people. I cannot admit it to be the duty of the Government to do so, because I believe it would entail consequences incompatible with English freedom. Are you prepared to say that the great and sacred duty of educating—the all-difficult work of modelling and training the mind of this great people—is to be committed to any set of officials that ever held office in this country? If it is the duty of the Government to educate the people, they must have the requisite power to perform that duty. You must not suppose that it will be extended only so far as the present Minutes of Council, but the whole work of the education of the people will be found a necessary consequence of admitting that it is the duty of Government to interfere at all. If it is the duty of the Government to train the minds of the people, then it must be its duty to attend also to these other educators the pulpit and the press. You cannot stop short of that, rely upon it, if the principle is once admitted. You must not stop, as was well urged by Mr. Sturge, until perhaps you have aimed at that point at which Lord Grey has arrived in an edict sent by him to the colony of Trinidad, and you must admit that it is the right of Government to make the education of the people compulsory, and to make it so by a system of fines and penalties, upon the parents, carried out by a system of police visitation to all the families of the land [cheers]. But, sir, I deny that it is the duty of the Government to educate the people upon another ground, and that is, that the Government is not properly qualified to educate the people [cheers]. It is sure as has been already stated upon many occasions that almost at all times and upon almost all questions, all Governments have been in arrears of the public mind both with respect to principles and to measures [hear, hear]. Have they not had to be driven by our friend in the chair? [cheers] and his colleagues in the great question of freedom of commerce. There never was any Government which has yet existed, that has been competent to meet the difficulty of training a whole people. There is a danger when the Government undertakes the education of the people of one of two opposite errors, either that the system should become too rigid, like that which exists on the continent of Europe, and then it extends a centralized system, utterly incompatible with the liberties of the people, or, on the other hand, the system will become too lax, there being mere local arrangements, just recognized by law, and adapted to local circumstances, as in the United States; and experience proves that such a system is utterly unfit for the purposes of education [cheers]. But do we not find, from experience, that all great Government institutions become the subjects of patronage, of jobbing, and of corruption? Do we not find in them all a tendency to stagnation? Do we not find that the machinery becomes far too unwieldy for the great work of educating a whole people? Then, sir, there is another insuperable difficulty in the way of Government undertaking the education of the people, and that arises from our differences of religious belief. Sir R. Peel has often said, that "you must take one of three courses" [laughter]. And so, sir, you must in this case. The first course is for Government to teach only one religion in the schools. That, I think you will admit to be partial and unjust. The second course is, to teach all religions. That, I think you must admit will tend inevitably to infidelity and indifference; or, finally, the Government can adopt the course of teaching no religion at all in their schools, and that is a system to which I believe neither Nonconformists nor members of the Church, in England, Wales, or Scotland will even give their

sanction. Then another objection to the Government undertaking the education of the people arises from its tendency to degrade the public mind, by taking away that noble self-reliance which is the chief boast, and the chief bulwark of liberty [cheers]. It was said by a former speaker, that the House of Commons was the Palladium of liberty. I think highly of that House, and of all its ancient forms, but I differ from that sentiment, it is not the House of Commons, it is not the law, it is the high spirit of the people of England [cheers]; it is that and that alone which is the palladium, and the safeguard of our liberties [cheers]. The duty of teaching the public mind rests upon the parent, to them it has been given by God; it is a duty entrusted to them by his holy word, and we must not seek to release them from it [cheers]. Your rights are precious, your immunities invaluable, but your duties are more precious still. They are not put upon you by your Maker as a burden and a task, they are given to you for cultivation by your moral and mental natures, given to you in order to train you to be useful upon earth and to fit you for a higher and a better state hereafter. There cannot be a greater evil than to take from the parents of England generally the education of their children [cheers]. There are cases, it is true, in which it is impossible for the parents, owing to ignorance or poverty, to provide the means of education for their children. In such cases what principle comes in? One most familiar, one of the highest principles of Christianity, that it is the duty of the strong to assist the weak, that it is the duty of the rich to communicate to the poor, and it is a principle inculcated with the assurance "that it is more blessed to give than to receive." I hold, therefore, that it is the duty of every patriot, of every Christian, and especially of every Christian Church and community, to give its assistance to those who cannot educate themselves [loud cheers]. But there is one other guarantee that the education of the people will not be neglected, and that guarantee is found in the principle upon which you, Sir, have often relied—it is the great principle of self-interest, and a full and fair competition among the teachers. It is their interest to excel in the work of teaching—let them alone—leave them to perfect freedom and open competition, and rely upon it, you have the best security that can be given for carrying the modes of tuition to the highest possible perfection [cheers]. But then, Sir, it is said that independent voluntary education has not succeeded; and that, therefore, you must resort to Government education. Now, if voluntary and independent education have, indeed, failed in England, I should like to know what reason have to trust to Government education in England. At all events, we are not a totally uneducated people. A nation that has risen to be the first in the world in arts, in arms, in commerce, in industry, in religion, and in benevolence, surely has not been taught upon a principle that is altogether unworthy of reliance. But what, Sir, has Government done, if it be its duty to educate (though, remember, I deny that)? but if it be, as our opponents say it is, the duty of the Government to educate the people, then they have utterly and entirely neglected it during all the centuries of English history until the year 1833. And what confidence can we have in those who have neglected their duty utterly for so many centuries discharging it in an effectual way now? But, Sir, I say that we have the strongest assurance, and authority the most indisputable, from the modern history of our country, that the people are both able and willing to educate themselves. Now I know that great assertions have been made on this subject, in this city, within the past week. Mr. Bence has put forth a statement upon the subject of the want of education. The Speaker then proceeded to combat the statements of that gentleman to show the fallacy of his arguments he having founded them upon the number of scholars in the public and private schools of the country in the year 1833 instead of the numbers in the year 1847. These numbers had increased 211 per cent. since the year 1818, and this had been brought about with the assistance of one half million of public money during that time while the sum of £8,000,000 had been raised and expended under the voluntary system. Besides that, contended the speaker, there was the great Sunday-school system, which provided accommodation for upwards of 2,000,000 scholars, and which were superintended by upwards of 400,000 gratuitous teachers, without having received a single penny from the Government. But then it was said that the quality of this education was very defective. He readily admitted that the quality was not all that they could wish. But even upon that point he was happy to be able to report progress. There were now no less than twenty-eight normal schools in England and Wales, in which were contained nine hundred and sixty students, training for schoolmasters and schoolmistresses. There were already many towns in which the accommodation in the schools was far greater than was needed for the scholars who used them. This was the case in the towns of Liverpool, of York, and of Leeds, and in many parts, too, of the City of London. It was a mistake to suppose that there was a great want of the means of education in this country [hear, hear]. He was quite sure that there were very many of the destitute classes of the people who could not afford to pay for the education thus provided, but the Government scheme would not, in the slightest degree, reach them [cheers]. But there was one institution of voluntary growth which was calculated to reach the great bodies of vicious characters which always herded together in large cities and towns, and that was the ragged schools; and of them it was that Lord Ashley said the Government must not meddle with them, for if they did, it would be sure to mar the instrumentality which had been so successful in the management of those schools. On the constitutional ground he would merely say that if the whole subject were to be left in the hands of a number of committees formed by the Executive Government, it would be just as reasonable to put into the hands of the Board of Trade the superintendence of all the industry of the country, giving it the power of establishing drawbacks, enforcing taxes, according to its own pleasure, and leaving them to ask the House of Commons for its annual vote to pay the expenses of those officers which the Board of Trade pleased to appoint for their purpose [hear, hear, and cheers]. He objected to the enormous influence of the executive. According to the most moderate computation there would not be less than 85,000 places directly under Government pay by means of the measure. Why, sir, the India bill brought in at the coalition of Lord North and Mr. Fox, was as nothing to this measure [cheers]. There was a rev. gentleman at Wakefield, in Yorkshire, the Rev. Mr. Sate who delivered a speech at a meeting held in that town a short time since, in favour of the Government measure. He expressed himself with considerable candour upon this subject. He said, that in his opinion the Reform Bill and the Municipal Corporations Bill had given great power to the people and he concluded his speech with a curious parody on a resolution passed in the House of Commons in the year 1780. The words of that resolution were, "That the power and influence of the Crown has increased, it is increasing and ought to be diminished." The rev. gentleman said, "It is my solemn belief that the power and influence of the people has increased, it is increasing, and ought to be diminished" [cheers]. Now he (Mr. Baines) thought that the most effectual way to diminish the power and influence of the people would be by pressing such a measure as the present. He objected to the measure on the ground that it would give a great increase of power to the established clergy of the land, who have ever been found upon the side opposed to popular liberty. He objected to the measure because it would be a new endowment of religion in this land ["No, no," and cheers]. He said, "Yes!" [renewed cheers and confusion.] It would be a new State endowment of religious teaching, in the closest alliance with the Established Church, and adding two millions sterling of the money of the people of England to the six millions sterling which that Church already possesses. He objected to the measure as a flagrant act of injustice towards the Dissenters, inasmuch as they could not conscientiously receive Government money for religious instruction, their schools would be destitute of all those pecuniary advantages lavished upon the schools of the Establishment, their schoolmasters would leave them, and the scholars would be led away from them [cheers]. It had been said, that the Government measure would elevate the schoolmasters ["No, no," and cheers]. It would give the more money to be sure, but every farthing of the money would be carved into a link of a chain that will bind them fast in bondage. An eminent philosopher and the founder of the school of modern politics had spoken in a work published some years since, most correctly and philosophically of the injurious effects of Government interference in schools, he alluded to Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations." The system would tend practically to injure the poor. When schools were supported by voluntary contributions they were supported, in a great measure, by the rich, or by those who were tolerably well situated. He was quite sure that if this measure were carried, Lord John Russell would have been the means of breaking up his party in the country [cheers], and of separating from himself those who had been the main body of his supporters in all past periods [cheers], and of driving the great body of liberals, who are the Nonconformists of England, to adopt that principle which had been so powerfully alluded to by Mr. Mill [cheers], and compel them to adopt the principle of hostility in mere self-defence to every form of endowment of religion in this country [cheers]. In conclusion

the speaker said, valuable as knowledge is to the community, I believe liberty to be of higher and more inestimable value, that liberty of England whose foundations were laid in a remote antiquity, which has been defended by the blood of patriots, which has been signally watched over by a Divine Providence, which, amid storms & dangers, is associated with all that is most glorious in our past annals, and with all our hopes for a prosperous future, which is connected with the attributes of religion itself, and all our social and intellectual attainments, and which extends its benign influence up in our hearths and our homes. I look upon that as something so noble and majestic that it is more worthy of worship than anything upon the face of this earth [cheers]. But laws and liberties are not self-sustained, they rest upon the basis of our national character, and if once that high-spirited independence of our people is brought down it will be destroying that rock upon which liberty has built her temple, and the fortress above them will sink into ruin. Guard, then, that national independence as the apple of your eye. Let nothing seduce you to impair it, and rely upon it that resting upon that rock not the temple of liberty alone, but upon her side the lantern of knowledge and religion shall stand secure to remote posterity [loud and protracted cheers].

Mr. J. HINTON seconded the resolution. He would not, at that late hour, detain the meeting, and would merely call its attention to a fact of which he had just been made acquainted through the columns of the *Sun* newspaper, to the effect that, in France, a system of education had been propounded, which, like the present, proposed to leave the matter in the hands of the clergy, and which, he was happy to say, was likely to meet with the most determined opposition, and would possibly be the means of breaking up the French Ministry.

A person named BROOKS moved the following amendment:—"That crime and immorality abound in this Christian country, and, as this meeting believes, arises from the want of an adequate efficient and universal system of education, which the plan of the Government only attempts to supply."

A person seconded the amendment, for which two or three hands were held up, and the original resolution was carried all but unanimously.

Mr. J. H. RYLAND, minister, of Bradford, Yorkshire, proposed, and Dr. JENKYN seconded a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN assured the meeting that whatever advantages they might have derived from the fact of having a chairman, he had derived great pleasure and great advantage from being there on that occasion. He thanked them for their kindness, and he should be most happy to do all in his power to promote the objects of the meeting, and prevent the passing of the measure.

The meeting then broke up.

THE GOVERNMENT EDUCATION SCHEME.

GRANTS TO ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS—PROBABLE MODIFICATION.

In the House of Commons, last night, Sir JAMES GRAHAM asked Lord John Russell if it was the intention of the Government that the aid intended to be granted to schools under the new Minutes of the Privy Council, was to extend to schools not in connexion with the National School Society or the British and Foreign Society; and, if so, whether the intentions of the Government had been properly represented by parties who asserted that no such aid would be extended to any schools in which the authorized version of the Scriptures was not used.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL replied: I will endeavour to explain to the right honourable gentleman, and to the House, how the matter stands with respect to which he asks these two questions. I can state, in the first place, that no alteration is made by the minute of 1846, and which has been laid on the table of the House, with respect to the granting aid to any schools not in connexion with the National Society or the British and Foreign Society, or with respect to granting aid to schools which have not used the authorized version of the Scriptures. But there have been inquiries made with respect to the intentions of the Committee of Privy Council on these points, and, in the answer that has been given, reference has been made to the Minutes of the Committee of Council of 1839 on this subject. Previously to 1839 the rule was, that aid should only be granted to schools that were in connexion with these two societies, and the awards were always made to these societies in the first instance. In 1839, however, it was laid down by the Committee of Council that they would be ready to consider other applications that did not come through either of these societies, but that any such applications must be considered as special cases, and that aid, if given, would be considered as special. It has been lately intimated by the Lord President of the Council (Lord Lansdowne) that he is ready to act on that minute, and that he does not think that the Committee of Council would insist that there should be a special case made out in each instance, but that, in any case of application for assistance or aid to be given, he thought the Committee of Council would, in such case, grant aid to schools not in connexion with the schools of these societies. He also referred, in his answer, to another question—namely, the decision of the Committee of Council in 1839, in which it was declared that, in all schools so aided, the authorized version of the Scriptures must be used. That was the decision made in 1839, and which, I believe—though there have been some two or three cases of Roman Catholic schools brought under the consideration of the Committee of Council—has not, since 1839, been departed from. But Lord Lansdowne thought it necessary to add, in order to prevent any misconception on the part of those to whom that answer was given, that, although the minute declared that the authorized version of the Scriptures must be used in its integrity in any school to which such aid was given, neither he, nor, he believed, the Committee of Council, would feel themselves at all precluded from preparing, or agreeing to other Minutes by which aid might be given to Roman Catholic schools, in cases where they thought fit, from the constitution of such schools, that aid should be granted. Those to whom he gave that information said they understood the present Minutes to confine the aid to schools in which the authorized version should be used, and that when those further Minutes were made known, they would be ready to offer them such opposition as they might think themselves bound to offer. I may say that no such Minutes have yet been agreed to. It is a subject that requires very mature deliberation, and I am not prepared to say that there may not be certain cases of Roman Catholic schools in which it might not be fit to give aid. But the terms of the limits to be set require very deliberate consideration, and these terms of the Minute will be maturely considered, and will be submitted to the House before any aid is asked for educational purposes from this House [hear, hear].

Sir JAMES GRAHAM: As I understand the noble lord, the Minute of Council, as it now stands, declares that no aid can be given to any school in which the authorized version of the Scripture is not used?

Lord JOHN RUSSELL: I beg again to say, that this regulation is not made by the Minute of Council of 1846, now under consideration, but that it follows from certain Minutes of Council of 1839 [hear, hear].

Mr. T. S. DUNCOMBE wished to know if the noble lord intended to persevere with his application in aid of education on Monday. He thought that after what had just fallen

from the noble lord, it would be better for him to postpone the further consideration of this question until the further limits to which he alluded were considered.

Lord J. RUSSELL: There is no need whatever of waiting for the settlement of these further limits, because everything that will be asked for on Monday will be expended under the limits that are already before the House. I may add, indeed, that it appears many parts of the subject will have to be undone. [This last sentence, says the *Chronicle*, the noble lord uttered in a very low tone, and it is, therefore, possible it may not be verbally accurate.] The *Times* gives a different version of the reply—

Lord JOHN RUSSELL: There is no need of waiting for any further Minutes, because everything that will be asked for on Monday will be expended under the Minutes of Council which are already before the House, and which are well known; and, indeed, it appears that on many parts of this subject, what was done some years ago is sought to be undone now [hear, hear].

BIRTHS.

April 5, at Calthorpe-terrace, Banbury, Oxon, the wife of RICHARD HENRY ROLLS, Esq., of a son.

April 5, at Writtle, the lady of Dr. ALEXANDER FLETCHER, of Finsbury chapel, London, of a daughter.

April 10, at 1, Wellington-place, St. Giles's, Oxford, the wife of Mr. JAMES SPENCE, M.A., minister, of a son.

MARRIAGES.

April 2, at Hudham chapel, Herts, by Mr. J. Lockyer, of Ponder's-end, minister, Mr. J. J. Rous, of Takeley, Essex, to Miss E. LOCKYER, of Hudham.

April 4, by Mr. E. C. Lewis, minister of the Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, Rochdale, Mr. HERON HOLDEN to Miss ELIZABETH CLEGG.

April 6, at Kingsland Chapel, by Mr. Thomas Aveling, pastor, Mr. JOSEPH WILSON, of Robinson's-row, Kingsland, to Miss JANE MARGARET KIDGELL, of the same place.

April 6, at 17, Salisbury-road, Edinburgh, by Dr. W. L. Alexander, GEORGE HARVEY, Esq., B.S.A., to MARGARET, eldest daughter of the late William Muir, Esq., merchant, Glasgow.

April 6, at St. Paul's Independent Chapel, Wigan, by Mr. William Roal, pastor, Mr. SAMUEL ANYON to Miss ALICE ATHERTON.

April 7, at Hope Chapel, Sandbach, by Mr. M. Shore, minister, Mr. STEPHEN WALLEY, to Miss ANN PEDLEY, of Haslington.

April 7, at the Gallowtree-gate Chapel, Leicester, by the Rev. G. Legge, D.D., Mr. JOHN Mc ALPIN, of Sparkenhoe-street, to ELIZABETH, daughter of Mr. R. BAIGGS, Belgrave-gate, Leicester.

April 8, at Northgate-end Chapel, Halifax, by Mr. William Turner, M.A., WM. ARTHUR CASE, Esq., M.A., of Upper Gower-street, London, to SARAH WOOLRICH, second daughter of James SANSFELD, Esq., Green Bank, Halifax.

April 8, at the Baptist Chapel, Wotton-under-Edge, by Mr. hn Watts, minister, Mr. GEORGE FOWLER, accountant, to Miss ARBET ALLEN, of the same place.

DEATHS.

March 23, at an advanced age, in the faith and hope of the Gospel, at Lambeth, ANN, relict of Mr. Samuel FRANKLIN, of the Countess's Connexion, and for many years pastor of the Independent Church, at the Cliffe Chapel, Lewes, Sussex.

March 30, in great peace, MARY, the beloved wife of Mr. FOSTER, of Morton-in-Marsh, in the 36th year of her age.

April 6, at Lower Broughton, Manchester, Miss ANNA LEA MASSIE, the much loved and eldest daughter of Dr. J. W. MASSIE, aged 14 years and nine months, after a lingering indisposition, endured with singular patience and serenity.

April 9, Mr. JOSEPH MELLOR, Almondsbury, near Huddersfield, in the 75th year of his age. He had been a member of the Baptist church, Lockwood, upwards of 50 years, and a deacon 36.

April 10, at Greenwich, to the grief of his friends, ARTHUR, the youngest son of the late Mr. AWTY, Thrybergh, Yorkshire, in the 23rd year of his age. His end was perfect peace.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Friday, April 9.

The following building is certified as a place duly registered for solemnizing marriages, pursuant to an act of the 6th and 7th William IV., c. 85:—

The Wesleyan Chapel, Haltwhistle, Northumberland.

BANKRUPTS.

BARRACLOUGH, THOMAS, Skircoat, Yorkshire, woollen manufacturers, April 22, May 11; solicitors, Messrs. Bond and Barwick, Leeds.

BLACKFORD, THOMAS, Little Wilde-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields, horse-hair manufacturer, April 16, May 21; solicitor, Mr. Gooday, South-square, Gray's-inn.

CAPPS, THOMAS, Lynn, dealer in toys, April 14, May 13; solicitor, Mr. Goddard, King-street.

CAWSTON, FREDERICK HARDING, Earl's Colne, Essex, plumber, April 17, May 18; solicitor, Mr. Gooday, Gray's-inn.

DANGERFIELD, ALEXANDER DANIEL, late of Salisbury-square, Fleet-street, printer, April 16, May 21; solicitor, Mr. O. Gray, Great Tower-street.

DONSON, JOHN RICHARD, St. Thomas's-street, Southwark, hop merchant, April 20, May 18; solicitor, Mr. H. Walker, Farnival's inn.

MARKINS, EDWARD, Upper Holloway, Islington, victualler, April 16, May 21; solicitor, Mr. Brooks, Great James-street.

TOWNLEY, WILLIAM, Blackburn, cotton spinner, April 22, May 13; solicitors, Messrs. Neville and Ainsworth, Blackburn.

WORTHINGTON, HENRY, Eccleshill, cotton manufacturer, April 20, May 11; solicitors, Messrs. Neville and Ainsworth, Blackburn.

SCOTCH SEQUESTERATIONS.

CARRIE, J. and I., Dundee, grocers, April 16, May 14.

CAMPBELL, DONALD, and Co., Glasgow, grain merchants, April 12, May 10.

LOTHIAN, JOHN and Co., Glasgow, merchants, April 16, May 7.

MACDONALD BROTHERS, Edinburgh, stationers, April 15, May 7.

MURDOCH, WILLIAM, Glasgow, soap maker, April 15, May 6.

STEWART, JOHN, late of Crieff, saddler, April 14, May 5.

WALTON, JAMES, Glasgow, wright, April 13, May 4.

DIVIDENDS.

Arthur Southcombe Tucker, and George Muriel Bidwell, of Melcombe Regis, grocers, final div. of 1s. 5d., on the joint estate, and first and final div. of 1s. 9d. on the separate estate of G. M. Bidwell; at 18, Aldermanbury, on any Saturday—John Donaldson, 291, Regent-street, and of 49 and 50, Margaret-street, coach maker, first div. of 5s.; at 18, Aldermanbury, on any Saturday—Douglas Anderson and Co., Old Broad-street, merchants, fifth div. of 2d.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—William Whistled Coleman, of Hill, Southampton, provision merchant, first div. of 1s. 6d.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—William Hodges, 48, Kingsgate-street, Holborn, cloth worker, first div. of 2s. 6d.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—John Cottingham Johnson, 3, Laurence Pountney-hill, Cannon-street, merchants, third div. of 3d.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—Thomas Lambert Powell, Romney, cabinet maker, first div. of 2s. 6d.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—William Allen, 25, Wheeler-street, Spitalfields, scaleboard manufacturer, first div. of 2s.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—Benjamin Louis Meyer Rothschild, 71, Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields, diamond merchant, second div. of 1d.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—John Morris, 53, Crown-street, Finsbury, and of 83, Old-street-road, leather seller, first div. of 3s.; at 3, Guildhall-chambers, any Thursday—John Thomas, Cwmnach, Glamorganshire, builder, first div. of 1s. 5d.; at 19, St. Augustine's-place, Bristol, on April 14, or any Wednesday after May 1.

Tuesday, April 13.

The following buildings are certified as places duly registered for solemnizing marriages, pursuant to an act of the 6th and 7th William IV., c. 85:—

Baptist Chapel, Sandhurst, Kent.

Congregational Chapel, Stockton.

BANKRUPTS.

BELL, MARY ELIZABETH, 16, Finch-lane, Cornhill, news-vender, April 23, June 1; solicitor, Mr. Johnston, 100, Chancery-lane.

DENNAN, THOMAS, 83, Quadrant, Regent-street, and 7, Buckingham-street, Fitzroy-square, stonemason, April 20, June 5; solicitors, Messrs. Lewis, Ely-place, Holborn.

DICKINSON, ROBERT, Poulton-in-the-Fylde, Lancashire, maltster, April 27, May 25; solicitors, Mr. Appleby, Harpur-street, London; Mr. Liddell, Poulton-in-the-Fylde; and Mr. J. N. G. Thompson, Liverpool.

DUNNICLIFF, JOHN DEARMAN, Nottingham, lace manufacturer, April 23, May 21; solicitor, Mr. A. Camm, Nottingham.

FACEY, HUGH HILL, Exeter, builder, April 29, May 19; solicitors, Mr. R. Fulford, Exeter; and Messrs. Coode and Co., Bedford-row, London.

FURLONG, PETER, Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Liverpool, merchant, April 27, May 14; solicitors, Messrs. Cornthwaite and Co., Old Jewry-chambers, London; and Mr. C. Pemberton, Liverpool.

KNIGHT, WILLIAM, Reading, wine merchant, April 20, May 28; solicitors, Mr. Holmes, Great James-street, Bedford-square; and Mr. Clarke, Reading.

PETTET, EDWARD, and NEWTON, WILLIAM, Lancaster-place, Strand, navy agents, April 22, May 20; solicitor, Mr. Coote, Bucklebury.

ROGERS, EDWARD, late of Everton, Lancashire, victualler, April 27, May 25; solicitors, Messrs. Johnson and Co., Temple, London; and Mr. Dewhurst, Liverpool.

SMITH, RICHARD, Kenn, Devonshire, butcher, April 21, May 18; solicitors, Mr. G. W. Turner, Exeter; and Mr. H. Coward, Lincoln's-inn-fields, London.

STEWART, CHARLES, 4, Little St. James's-street, builder, April 23, May 28; solicitor, Mr. Angell, Dean's-court, Doctors'-commons.

TIBBET, EDWARD, 22, Frith-street, Soho, diamond merchant, April 20, June 3; solicitor, Mr. Teague, Crown-court, Chancery.

SCOTCH SEQUESTERATIONS.

BUCHANAN, MOSES, late of Glasgow, miller, April 15, May 6.

JOSEPH LILBURN, Glasgow, wright, April 19, May 10.

DIVIDENDS.

Henry William Hobhouse, Johnson Phillott, and Charles Lowder, Bath, bankers, fourth div. of 4d., payable at 9, New Bond-street, Bath, as follows:—Creditors whose names commence with A, B, or C, on April 19; D, E, F, or G, on April 20; H, I, J, K, or L, on April 21; M, N, O, P, Q, or R, on April 22; S, T, U, V, W, X, or Y, on April 23. Also, payable at 19, St. Augustine's-place, Bristol, on the following Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, in the same alphabetical order; and on any Wednesday after May 1—Henry Leonard, Cheltenham, ironmonger, first div. of 2s. 11d.; at 19, St. Augustine's-place, Bristol, any Wednesday after May 1—Thomas Lewis, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, laceman, first div. of 1s.; at 111, Pilgrim-street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on any Saturday—John Dodsworth Browning, Bristol, upholsterer, first div. of 3s. 6d.; at 19, St. Augustine's-place, Bristol, any Wednesday—John Adamson, Stockport, grocer, final div. of 3s. 3d.; at 72, George-street, Manchester, any Tuesday—Anselm Colton Fowler, Louth, draper, second div. of 2s. 11d.; at 2, Basinghall-street, any Wednesday.

BRITISH FUNDS.

	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Mon.	Tues.
3 percent. Consols ..	87½	87	86½	85½	85½	87½
Otto for Account....	87½	87	86½	85½	85½	87½
3 percent Reduced....	86½	86	85½	84½	84½	86½
New 3½ percent.....	87½	87½	87½	86½	86½	88½
Long Annuities.....	9	9	9	9	14	9
Bank Stock.....	—	198	195	194	—	199½
India Stock.....	—	—	—	—	—	—
Exchequer Bills.....	par	1pm	3 dis	par	5dis	2pm
India Bonds.....	—	—	2	1dis	par	1pm

MARKETS.

MARK LANE, MONDAY, April 12.

The supply of English Wheat this morning has again been very short, and factors had no difficulty in clearing their stands at 2s. to 3s. per qr. advance from last Monday. Foreign Wheat and Flour participated in the rise; and there is a good demand for the latter article amongst the town millers. The quantity of English Barley on sale was not large, though there was a rather extensive supply of Foreign in during the week. Holders held for an advance of 1s. per qr., though this was not generally obtained. Beans and Peas are dull sale, and 1s. to 2s. per qr. lower. There has been a good demand for Oats to-day, and an advance of 1s. to 1s. 6d. per qr. since last Monday.

Wheat, Red.....	74 to 78	Peas, Hog.....	52 to 55
New.....	77 to 80	Maple.....	53 to 58
White.....	77 to 82	Boilers.....	51 to 60
New.....	80 to 84	Beans, Ticks.....	46 to 48
Flour, per sack (Town) 60 ..	65	Pigeon.....	52 to 54
Barley.....	42 to 44	Harrow.....	48 to 50
Malt, Ordinary.....	53 to 55	Oats, Feed.....	29 to 33
Malt, Pale.....	68 to 70	Fine.....	35 to 39
Rye.....	74 to 76	Poland.....	— to —
Peas.....	52 to 56	Potato.....	33 to 35

Wheat.....	77s. 1d.	Wheat.....	75s. 6d.
Barley.....	51 3	Barley.....	52 10
Oats.....	31 8	Oats.....	31 8
Rye.....	57 7	Rye.....	56 3
Beans.....	51 5	Beans.....	52 5
Peas.....	56 10	Peas.....	56 10

BUTCHER'S MEAT, SMITHFIELD, Monday, April 12.

Notwithstanding the attendance of buyers was large, the Beef trade, owing to the immense number of Beasts on show, and the change in the weather, was excessively dull, at a decline on last week's prices of quite 2d. per 8lbs., the highest quotation for the best Scots not exceeding 4s. 2d. per 8lbs. At the close of business a large number of Beasts left the market unsold. The numbers of sheep were considerably on the increase, and of very excellent quality. The prime old Downs, which were rather scarce, moved off slowly at last week's prices; but all other breeds were very dull, and quite 2d. per 8lbs. lower than on this day se'nlight. The Lamb trade was in a very depressed state at a fall in value of 4d. per 8lbs., the highest figure not exceeding 6s. per 8lbs. Calves were in short supply and heavy demand at Friday's quotations. In Pigs very little was doing, and the rates had a downward tendency.

Price per stone of 8lbs. (sinking the offal).

Beef.....	2s. 10d. to 4s. 2d.	Veal.....	4s. 0d. to 5s. 0d.
Mutton.....	3 6 to 5 6	Pork.....	3 8 to 5 0
Lamb.....	5s. 0d. to 6s. 0d.		

HEAD OF CATTLE AT SMITHFIELD.

Beasts.....	1,107	Sheep.....	5,550	Calves.....	169	Pigs.....	280
Friday.....	1,107	Monday.....	2,400	Friday.....	169	Monday.....	327

NEWGATE AND LEADENHALL MARKETS, Monday, April 12.

Inf. Beef 2s. 10d. to 3s. 0d.	Inf. Mutton 3s. 8d. to 3s. 10d.
Middleling do 3 0 to 3 2	Mid. ditto 4 0 to 4 2
Prime large 3 2 to 3 4	Prime ditto 4 4 to 4 6
Prime small 3 6 to 3 8	Veal 4 0 to 5 2
Large Pork 3 8 to 4 0	Small Pork 4 8 to 5 0

SEEDS, LONDON, Monday.—The Clover-seed trade was very quiet this morning, and the demand for sowing appears to be nearly over. Last week several parcels of French seed were taken on speculation, generally at very low rates, but this morning no inclination was shown to purchase. In other sorts of seed scarcely anything was done, and quotations are little better than nominal.

PROVISIONS, LONDON, Monday.—Of Irish butter the dealers here bought sparingly; for some parts of the country and Scotland, the demand upon the whole was good, and therefore a fair amount of business was done, at prices varying from 80s. to 92s. per cwt., according to kind and quality; foreign in steady request at last quotations, say from 80s. to 100s. per cwt.—Bacon: with increased supplies and limited demand, prices in the early part of last week gave way, and some parties offered prime singed sides at 64s. to 66s., which attracted buyers, but towards the close holders generally refused to sell under 66s. to 72s. per cwt. Bales and tierce middles met a slow sale at about 62s. to 66s.; so also hams, at 68s. to 82s.; and lard at 75s. to 82s. for bladdered, and 65s. to 70s. per cwt. Eggs. In cheese the demand has been principally for the finest sorts. The demand for second rate things ran almost exclusively on American, and these the holders are pushing off at moderate rates.

BREAD.—The prices of wheaten bread in the metropolis are from 9½d. to 10d.; of household ditto, 8d. to 9d. per 4lbs. loaf.

HOPS, BOROUGH, Monday, April 12.—There is no variation to notice in the general character of our market, since our last report. The demand is moderate, and prices remain about the same.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, HOLLOWAY. ANNIVERSARY SERVICES.

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 7th, 1847, the Rev. T. RAFFLES, D.D., LL.D., will preach in the MORNING, Service to commence at ELEVEN o'clock; and the Rev. THOMAS BINNEY in the EVENING, Service to commence at Half-past SIX. On TUESDAY evening, the 20th inst., the Rev. T. RAFFLES, D.D., LL.D., will preach in the evening, service to commence at SEVEN o'clock.

A Collection will be made after each Service. On Tuesday, 20th inst., Dinner will be provided in the School-room, at Two o'clock. Tickets Five Shillings each, may be obtained in the Vestry.

BRITISH SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE JEWS.

A MEETING FOR SPECIAL UNITED PRAYER

on behalf of the Jews, and to implore the Divine Blessing on Christian effort for their Spiritual welfare will be held (D.V.) on MONDAY Evening, APRIL 19th, in WARDOUR CHAPEL, CHAPEL-STREET, SOHO, at SEVEN o'clock. An address will be delivered by the Rev. R. ALLIOTT, LL.D.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the Subscribers and Friends of the Society will be held on THURSDAY Evening, APRIL 22nd, in FREEMASONS' HALL, Great Queen-street. The Chair to be taken at SIX o'clock. Tickets may be had at the Office, No. 1, Crescent-place, Blackfriars; of Messrs. Aylott and Jones, 8, Paternoster-row; Nisbet and Co., 21, Berners-street; Cotes, 139, Chesapeake; and Miller and Field, 6, Bridge-road, Lambeth.

HISTORICAL PAINTINGS.

COMPETITION OF ARTISTS OF ALL NATIONS. SUBJECT—"THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST IN THE JORDAN." Pictures two years in preparing. Size of the canvas, 15 feet by 12 feet. Premium, £1000.

The Paintings forwarded for this competition, having been honoured with a private inspection by H. R. H. the Prince Albert, on Tuesday last, will be opened to the public on Saturday next, from ten to six o'clock, in the room lately occupied by the Chinese Collection, Hyde Park Corner.

Admittance, 2s. 6d.; Children under 12 years of age, 1s.; Family Tickets for five persons, 7s.

SMITH'S PATENT ADHESIVE ENVELOPES.

The demand for these Envelopes is so great, and they are now so highly appreciated by Noblemen, Gentlemen, the Managers of Public Institutions, &c., &c., that several unprincipled persons are offering for sale a worthless imitation, and others are representing themselves to be "Agents for the Sale of Smith's Patent Adhesive Envelopes," whereas, J. SMITH has no appointed Agent. To prevent imposition, therefore, the Public are respectfully requested to observe that every Envelope bears the inscription: "SMITH'S PATENT ADHESIVE, 42, Rathbone-place, London." All others are fraudulent imitations.

N.B. For India communication these Envelopes are invaluable.

RESOLUTIONS passed at the GENERAL NON-CONFORMIST MEETING, held in the Town Hall, to oppose the Government Education Scheme, April 12, 1847:—

Moved by the Rev. D. R. Stephens; seconded by the Rev. William Patterson; supported by George Hadfield, Esq.:—

1. That the establishment of any religious sect by the government a country, is unscriptural, unjust, and beyond the legitimate province of the civil magistrate.

Moved by the Rev. Dr. Nolan; seconded by the Rev. Dr. Massie; supported by the Rev. Dr. Halley:—

2. That the Minutes of education, recently issued by her Majesty's Privy Council, involve the principle of establishing all religions, inasmuch as it is proposed to aid the religious education of all who will accept money from the State for that purpose.

RESOLUTIONS passed at the ADJOURNED GENERAL NONCONFORMIST MEETING, held in the CORN EXCHANGE, MANCHESTER, to oppose the Government Scheme of Education, April 12, 1847.

Moved by the Rev. F. Tucker; seconded by the Rev. D. E. Ford; supported by A. Prentice, Esq.:—

1. That the legitimate tendency of the measure will be to augment the wealth and power of the Established Church of this country, to enervate the voluntary efforts of the friends of a free education, and actively to promote the teaching of error, equally with truth.

Moved by the Rev. Dr. Davidson; seconded by the Rev. R. Morris:—

2. That this meeting is convinced that the immense patronage which the measure will necessarily place in the hands of a Privy Council composed of men whose principles may differ as the members themselves change, is prejudicial to the liberties of the subject, degrading to the cause of religion, and adverse to the development of those intellectual and moral engines which constitute the real glory of the nation; while violence is done to the consciences of a large number of her Majesty's loyal subjects, and premiums are held out as an inducement to attend religious duties.

Moved by the Rev. A. E. Pearce; seconded by Thomas Roberts, Esq.:—

3. That the following Petition to the House of Commons be adopted, and signed by the Chairman on behalf of the meeting, and afterwards entrusted to the Right Honourable Thomas Milner Gibson to present; and that Mark Phillips, Esq., Joseph Brotherton, Esq., John Bright, Esq., and the members for this division of the county, be respectfully requested to support its prayer.

Moved by John Burd, jun., Esq.; seconded by A. M'Dougal, Esq.:—

4. That the foregoing resolutions be advertized in the *Patriot*, the *Nonconformist*, the *Manchester Times*, the *Manchester Express*, *Examiner*, and the *Manchester Guardian*.

Moved by Mr. Harrison; seconded by Mr. Taylor:—

5. That the most cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to Mr. Alderman Burd for his valuable presidency on this occasion.

SAMUEL DAVIDSON.

THE GOVERNMENT SCHEME OF EDUCATION.

AT an ADJOURNED MEETING of the GENERAL CONFERENCE of persons deputed by the Opponents of the Government Scheme of Education throughout the Kingdom, held at the KING'S HEAD, POULTRY, on Friday, the 16th of April, 1847.

The Rev. SAMUEL GREEN in the chair.

It was resolved unanimously:—

That the explanation made in the House of Commons by Lord John Russell, in answer to the question of Sir James Graham, relative to the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, on Thursday evening, the 15th instant, gives increased countenance to the belief that the Government is acting a disingenuous part, with a view to propitiate the Roman Catholics on the one side, and the Wesleyans and a section of the Established Church on the other; and that this affords another illustration of the evils and dangers of entrusting the great interests of education and religion to a Committee of Council which may vary its policy and principles from day to day to suit a temporary expediency.

That this Resolution be advertized in the following journals:—The "Times," the "Morning Chronicle," the "Globe," the "Sun," the "Patriot," and the "Nonconformist."

By order of the Conference,

J. W. MASSIE, } Secretaries.
J. H. HINTON, }
J. M. HARE. }

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